Deccan College Dissertation Series

9

ṚGVEDIC LEGENDS THROUGH THE AGES

BY

H. L. HARIYAPPA

DECCAN COLLEGE
Postgraduate & Research Institute

POONA

ṚGVEDIC LEGENDS

THROUGH THE AGES

By

H. L. Hariyappa, M.A., Ph.D. (Bombay)
Assistant Professor of Sanskrit, Mysore University, Mysore;
Editor, Poona Orientalist.

POONA

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Dedicated

to

The Revered Teachers

as an humble token

of gratitude

OM

TÁT SAVITÚR VÁREṆYAM

BHÁRGO DEVÁSYA DHĪMAHI

DHÍYO YÓ NAḤ PRACODÁYĀT

RV III 62.10.

Vyāsādibhiḥ kavivarair avasādito'pi

Śūnyatvam āpa kalayāpi na vākprapañcaḥ

Ānandanirbharacakorasahasrapītam

Cāndram mahaḥ kṣayam upaiti na mātrayāpi

—*Sūktimuktāvali*

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FOREWORD

The present volume constitutes the ninth of the Institute's series entitled the *Deccan College Dissertation Series*, inaugurated in 1946 with the *Historical Grammar of Old Kannaḍa* by Dr. G. S. Gai. Since then the Institute has brought out during the past seven years seven volumes in the Series embodying the results of the researches carried on by its students during the last few years in different branches of Indology, particularly Linguistics and History, and I consider it a great privilege to present to the world of scholars the Institute's latest publication entitled *Ṛgvedic Legends through the Ages** by Dr. H. L. Hariyappa, now an Assistant Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Mysore and a former student of this Institute for his Ph.D. Course.

The subject of Dr. Hariyappa's thesis which is styled *Ṛgvedic Legends through the Ages* was originally undertaken by him with a view to collecting all the legends which were referred to in the Ṛgveda and have been transmitted to us through subsequent Vedic and post-Vedic literature including the Epics and the Purāṇas and studying the transformation which the legends underwent from age to age. Actual experience, however, proved that such a study of all the legends recorded in the Ṛgveda was too vast to be undertaken by a single individual. The author had, therefore, to confine himself to the investigations with regard to only three legends *viz.* (1) Saramā, (2) Śunaśśepa and (3) Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra, and I am happy to see that the results of his investigations are now available to the scholars and students of Sanskrit.

It is hoped that the publication of the present volume as also of the several others in the Institute's Dissertation Series will inspire our younger generation to undertake the study of numerous problems of Indian literature which forms the cultural heritage of India.

Poona, 15th June, 1953. S. M. Katre.

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PREFACE

MYTHOLOGY, FOLKLORE AND LEGEND are terms more are less applied to the same type of popular tradition handed down through centuries from antiquity to posterity. In Bharatavarṣa (India), such a tradition has endured in the shape of *itihāsa* and *purāṇa,* which once upon a time lived in the mouths of the *paurāṇikas* (story-tellers) and which, in later times, found embodiment in the two great epics and the eighteen purāṇas.

Narration of legends before the assembly (*sadas*) provided an agreeable diversion in the daily routine of the famous Sacrifices from immemorial times. The reason is that, whatever name it goes by—myth, legend or folk-tale—the story attracts and holds the imagination of the listener. The very mould in which it is presented, *iti ha āsa* ('thus it was') is sufficient to arrest the faculty of belief, the love of the wonderful and the *sensus numinis,* which are innate in man. Thus we find that the myths and legends thrive on the fertile soil of popular credulity. Both the narrator and the listener together build up the vast legendary love of the nations and races.

Indeed, the myth or legend cannot come into being without a kernel of truth which is sometimes a natural phenomenon or a hero with superhuman strength and achievement. But passing through the mouth of generations, what proportion it assumes, what texture, colour and pattern it presents, and what authority and influence it wields on the belief and conduct of the common folk, is all a marvel to meditate.

The legends of India are rooted in the Ṛgveda which happens to be the first literary document of the human race. Their analogues are of the course found in the mythology of other nations. In India itself, the legends developed and ramified through the ages and found themselves reflected in the continuous streem of literature. This book, ṚGVEDIC LEGENDS THROUGH THE AGES, is an attempt to study this historical evolution of the legends with a view to unravelling the complexities incidental to it. The legends are numerous and should be the life-work of many an eager scholar to study. In the short compass of this book, however, three legends have been presented—Saramā, Śunaśśepa and Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra. It is revealed that Saramā is *not* the dog of heaven; she is verily a goddess and ally of Indra; the progenitor perhaps of the canine species. Śunaśśepa ('source of joy' *not* 'dog-tailed' as commonly understood: see p. 230 *et seq*) was saved from the thousand-edged stakes, hence a symbol of divine grace and man's emancipation. That he was the middle one (*madhyama*) of a fraternity with canine attributes is fiction out-and-out. Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra feud is equally a myth; it has no vedic authority; possibly the two sages

were friends! In fact, they stand out as two magnificent personalities representing ancient society, Vasiṣṭha (the Excellent) and Viśvāmitra (the Friend of All).

One point of supreme importance may be noted here. Legends everywhere are narrated in order to please and to edify. In promoting these two objects, it is noticeable that both story-teller and his listener go to extremes. There is endless and unbridled concoction which renders the story ridiculous betraying much low taste: witness the Śunaśśepa legend in the Devī-Bhāgavata for instance (p. 216) witness also, in our own day, the daring *harikathā*-performer whose discourses are, more often than not, such travesty of the scriptures. It is therefore not surprising that, in this Age of Reason, the Purāṇas do not appeal to the intelligent public. The writer however feals that in attempting to know our antiquity it is worthy to address ourselves to the study of original sources and help a better and more sensible understanding of the Past.

It is my most pleasant duty to record my sincere acknowledgment of the help received by me in the preparation and publication of this thesis. The University of Mysore granted me a Research Fellowship for three years and also permission to work in the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute (DCPRI). They were also pleased to permit me to submit the thesis for the degree of Ph.D. of the University of Bombay. I am deeply grateful to my Alma-Mater, the Mysore University.

Professor C. R. Narasimhasastri, M.A., directed my work first. I owe it to him to have suggested the topic of my research. He was my teacher throughout my College career. It is no exaggeration to say that his profound scholarship enlivened by an inimitable sense of with and humour brought me lasting enlightenment. After his retirement, I studied entirely under the auspices of the DCPRI, first under Dr. V. M. Apte, M.A., Ph.D. (Cantab.) and then under Dr. S. M. Katre, M.A., Ph.D. (London). It was by the fostering care bestowed on me by Dr. Katre that I was able to complete my work successfully. He has showered on me unbounded grace by publishing this Volume in the Dissertation Series of the DCPRI. No word can sufficiently express my gratitude to him. He hates nothing but praise; loves everything but self.

I cannot conclude this without gratefully remembering the ungrudging help and courtesy that I received from the DCPRI Library and the Staff, during my sojourn at the Deccan College, Poona.

Mysore,
19-5-1953.

H. L. Hariyappa

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RV. ... ... Ṛgveda-Saṁhitā with Sāyaṇa's com. ed. Max MÜLLER 2nd edn. Oxford 1892. 4 vols. (*b*) Recent edn. by the Vaidika Saṁśodhana Maṇḍala, Poona.

TS ... ... Taittirīya—with Sāyaṇa and Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara. ed. Ānandāśrama, Poona.

VS ... ... Vājasaneyī—of the Mādhyandinas with Mahīdhara ed. Albrecht WEBER, Berlin and London 1852.

MS ... ... Maitrāyaṇī—ed. SATAVALEKAR (Aundh).

KS ... ... Kāṭhaka—ed. SATAVALEKAR (Aundh).

KapS ... ... Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha Saṁhitā ed. Raghu VIRA, Vol. I.

AV ... ... Atharvaveda —ed. S. P. PANDIT.

Translations

RV ... ... H. H. WILSON (original edn.) 2nd edn. (Bangalore Press), (*b*) GRIFFITH (*c*) H. D. VELANKAR—Indra Hymns (JUB 1935-1947). (*d*) Tr. into German, GELDNER, Der Rigveda (RV Maṇḍalas I-IV).

TS ... ... Veda of the Black Yajus School, A. B. KEITH (HOS).

VS ... ... GRIFFITH.

AV ... ... (*a*) W. D. WHITNEY (HOS) (*b*) GRIFFITH.

II. Brāhmaṇas : Editions :

AB ... ... Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. Ānandāśrama (2 vols.). (*b*) ed. Satyavrata Sāmaśramī B. I. Calcutta.

ŚāṅkhB. ... ... Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa—Ānandāśrama.

TB ... ... Taittirīya—Mysore Oriental Library.

ŚB ... ... Śatapatha—(*a*) WEBER with Coms. (*b*) Kāśī Sanskrit Series (*c*) Laxmi Venkateśvara Press, Bombay.

PB ... ... Pañcaviṁśa—(Tāṇḍya) ed. Chinnaswami SASTRI (1935) Kāśī Sanskrit Series.

JB ... ... Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa in Auswahl : CALAND.

JUBr. ... ... Jaiminīya Upaniṣad (Talavakāra) Brāhmaṇa : Hanns OERTEL (American Oriental Society).

ṢaḍB ... ... Ṣaḍviṁśa—W. H. JULIUS with com. Vijñāpanabhāṣya.

GB ... ... Gopatha—GAASTRA (Leiden) 1919.

EK ... ... Ekāgni-Kāṇḍa (Mysore).

Translations

AB ... ... Rigveda Brāhmaṇas Translated. KEITH (HOS).

ŚB ... ... Śatapatha. tr. J. EGGELING (SBE 12, 26, 41, 43, 44).

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ŚāṅkhĀ ... ... Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka : Text, Ānandāśrama, Poona ; tr. A. B. KEITH (Oriental Translation Fund) RAS

TaitĀ ... ... Taittirīya Āraṇyaka (BI. Calcutta, 1871).

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Śāṅkh. ŚS. ... Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra ed. HILLEBRANDT BI. Calcutta 1888 (2 vols.).

ĀpŚS ... ... Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra ed. GARBE BI (3 vols.).

VaitS ... ... Vaitāna Sutra ed. GARBE (London) 1878.

ĀśGS ... ... Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra, ed. STENZLER, Leipzig, 1878.

PGS ... ... Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtra, ed. STENZLER, Leipzig, 1878.

ĀpDhS ... ... Āpastamba Dharma Sūtra (BSS).

GDhS ... ... Gautama Dharma Sūtra (Mys. Oriental Library) and ĀnSS.

VDhS ... ... Vāsiṣṭha Dharma Sūtra ed. FÜHRER (BSS).

V. Vedic Ancillaries :

Nir. ... ... Yāska's Nirukta ed. BHADKAMKAR with Durga's com. 2 vols. (BSS). (*b*) ed. SARŪP with Coms. of Skandasvāmin and Maheśvara (Nighaṇṭu and the Nirukta), Lahore (*c*) tr. SARUP (OUP).

Nigh. ... ... Nighaṇṭu (contained in Yāska's Nirukta).

BD ... ... Bṛhaddevatā. ed. and tr. A. A. MACDONELL (HOS vols. 5 and 6).

Sarvā. ... ... Sarvānukramaṇī with Ṣaḍguruśiṣya's com. ed. MACDONELL (Aenecdota Oxoniensia) Oxford.

Ind MM. ... ... Indices for RV by Max MÜLLER (RV with Sāyaṇa, 6 vols. 1st edn. bound together as Vol. VII in DCPRI.).

RVPr. ... ... Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya ed. and tr. Dr. Mangal Deva SASTRI (Lahore and Allahabad) Vols. II and III.

VPK ... ... Vaidika Padānukrama Kośa ed. Viśvabandhu SASTRI (VRI Lahore). Saṁhitās (one vol. in part) and Brāhmaṇas (complete).

BVC ... ... BLOOMFIELD'S *Vedic Concordance* (HOS).

Nīti, NM ... Nītimañjarī ed. Joshi (Benares).

Vaid. ŚK.... ... Vaidika Śabda Kośa by Nityānanda (NS Press) for RV, VS, SV and AV.

VI. Epics :

Rām. ... ... Rāmāyaṇa with com. "Tilaka" (Nirnayasagar Press, referred to sometimes as NS Press or NS edn.) (*b*) ed. GORRESIO (1843-67).

Mbh. ... ... Mahābhārata (*a*) BORI edn. in progress (Poona) (*b*) Citraśālā edn. (complete 7 vols. including Harivaṁśa) with Nīlakaṇṭha's com.

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VP. Vāyu ... Vāyu Purāṇa ed. (*a*) BI Calcutta (*b*) ĀnSS.

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BI	... ...	Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta).
BS	... ...	Bibliotheca Sanskrita (Mysore).
BSS	... ...	Bombay Sanskrit Series (BORI).
EIAR	... ...	Encylopædia of Indo-Aryan Research (Strassburg).
GOS	... ...	Gaekwad Oriental Series (Baroda).
HOS	... ...	Harvard Oriental Series (Harvard, USA).
IT	... ...	Indian Texts Series (London).
KSS	... ...	Kāśi Sanskrit Series (Benares).
OUP	... ...	Oxford University Press (Oxford).
SBE	... ...	Sacred Books of the East (Oxford).

XII. Journals etc.

ABORI	... ...	Annals of BORI.
AIOC	... ...	All-India Oriental Conference (Proceedings), BORI.
AmJPh.	...	American Journal of Philology.
BDCRI	... ...	Bulletin of the DCRI, Poona.
Bh.Vid.	... ...	Bharatiya Vidya, Bombay.
BORI	... ...	Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.
DCRI	... ...	Deccan College Post-graduate and Research Institute, Poona.
IA	... ...	Indian Antiquary.
IC ...	... ...	Indian Culture, Calcutta.
IF	... ...	Indo-germanische Forschungen, Berlin.
IHQ	... ...	Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
JAOS	... ...	Journal of the American Oriental Society, New Haven, U.S.A.
JASB	... ...	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JBBRAS	... ...	Journal of the Bombay Branch of the RAS.
JBU	... ...	Journal of the Bombay University.
JBORS	... ...	Journal of the Behar and Orissa Research Society.
JDL	... ...	Journal of the Department of Letters (Calcutta University).

JMys.U.	... ...	Journal of the Mysore University.
JORM	... ...	Journal of Oriental Research, Madras.
JRAS	... ...	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JUPHS	... ...	Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.
KPH	... ...	Karnatak Publishing House, Bombay.
NIA	... ...	New Indian Antiquary, KPH, Bombay. (Now DCRI, Poona).
OBA	... ...	Oriental Book Agency, Poona.
PO	... ...	Poona Orientalist, OBA, Poona.
QJMS	... ...	Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Bangalore.
VVRI	... ...	Viśveśvarānanda Vedic Research Institute, Lahore.
ZDMG	... ...	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, Leipzig.

INTRODUCTION

THE SUBJECT AND ITS SCOPE

THE subject of this study is entitled "ṚGVEDIC LEGENDS THROUGH THE AGES." The purpose is to gather all the legends which are clearly referred to in the Ṛgveda and which have come down to us through subsequent Vedic and post-Vedic literature, including the Epics and the Purāṇas, to record the transformation which they have undergone from age to age and then to determine the rationale of such transformation. Incidentally, the chronology of the several ancient texts apart from the very Age of the Ṛgveda comes into inquiry. The orignial home of the Ṛgvedic seers and the provenance of the sacred hymns require discussion. Whether there was an Indo-Iranian period at all in the great trek of the ancients, whether the Indian branch was quite independent of the Iranian, or whether the latter subsequently branched off from India Iran-wards—these are problems still awaiting solution. In the meantime, the great discovery of the prehistoric cultures of Harappa and Mohenjodaro and kindred types in Asia Minor has challenged all the more the tenacious efforts of Research to unravel ancient chronology. It has even baffled attempts to determine the relative sequence of the Ṛgvedic and the Indus-Valley civilizations. While the student owes a great debt to the researches of pioneers like Max Müller and Darmesteter, followed by a galaxy of accomplished scholars in India and outside and while, again, he is as much beholden to the finds of great explorers like Marshall, Majumdar and Aurel Stein, a more intensive study of protohistoric documents and a more extensive excavation of prehistoric sites,[1] and, above all, a consistent and comprehensive appreciation of the results of the twofold inquiry (literary and archæological), yet appear to be desirable pursuits.

It was originally intended to study all if not most of the legends but the material collected grew into great proportion and the range of study extending from the Ṛgveda to the Purāṇas through the intermediate stages represented by the later Samhitās, the Brāhmaṇas, the Epics etc., a study of all the legends proved impossible within the allotted time. Hence, three legends only were taken up for detailed investigation *viz.* (1) SARAMĀ (2) ŚUNAŚŚEPA[2] and (3) VASIṢṬHA AND VIŚVĀMITRA.

II

PŪRVASŪRAYAḤ

The subject of Vedic Legends is vast, but comparatively few scholars have dealt with it[3]. The light of Vedic tradition was however kept burning in works

1. " Domain of prehistory ends with the appearance of written documents ; Indus Civilisation belongs to proto-history (up to Alexander's invasion) " Rev. H. Heras, Pre-history and Proto-history (JBROS 28, June 1942).
2. On the orthography of this word *vide* section X (end) of ch. III *infra.*
3. *Cf.* Dr. C. K. Rāja's Presidential address, para 5 (Vedic Section) XII AIOC (Benares 1944).

like the Nirukta, Bṛhaddevatā and Sarvānukramaṇī and by commentators like Sāyaṇa and Ṣaḍguruśiṣya.[4] Dyā Dviveda's Nītimañjarī is perhaps the last known attempt to record and interpret the legends of the Ṛgveda.

Since the time of the " discovery of Sanskrit," however, pioneers[5] in the West have among their writings recorded their impressions of various legends. An elaborate historical study was made by J. Muir in his " Original Sanskrit Texts " (5 vols.). Latterly, Dr. Sieg wrote a monograph on " Die Ṣagenstoffe des Ṛgveda und die indische Itihāsatradition " setting forth general principles of investigation and dealing with four legends.[6] Jarl Charpentier wrote a dissertation on " Die Suparṇasage "[7] wherein he not only ' analyses the several motifs of the Suparṇa legend but also makes a learned contribution to the study of Indian legends in general.' Macdonell and Keith's " Vedic Index of Names and Subjects "[8] is an invaluable contribution in the field, apart from being a veritable source-book of Vedic lore in general. F. E. Pargiter has attempted to correlate the Purāṇic legends with those of the Veda and brought out his " Ancient Indian Historical Tradition."[9] Studies of single legends have been published from time to time by Bloomfield, Macdonell and others. In India too, considerable interest has been evinced by several scholars.[10]

III

SOURCES OF STUDY

An attempt is made to go into the original sources for a study of the legends. Mainly, the sources are :

(*a*) The Samhitās and other Vedic texts including the Brāhmaṇas (1500 B.C.–600 B.C.)[11]

(*b*) Yāska's Nirukta[12] (500 B.C.)

(*c*) Śaunaka's Bṛhaddevatā[13] (400 B.C.).

4. This is so far as the legends are concerned. Nirukta relates 36 stories, BD 40 and Śiṣya 23. The stories related by Sāyaṇa are innumerable.

5. *e.g.* Roth (Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Weda) ; Max Müller (History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature), H. H. Wilson (Translation of RV in 6 vols.). Wilson has noted all the legends in his notes and sometimes given a historical estimate.

6. *Viz.* Die Śārṅgas, Śyāvāśva Ātreya, Vṛśa Jāna and Vāmadeva Gautama. Some of the author's views were open to criticism. *Cf.* BD ed. Macdonell, p. xxix and n. 4 on the same page.

7. Uppsala and Leipzig, 1920.

8. Indian Texts Series, John Murray, London, 1912 (in 2 vols.).

9. Oxford University Press, 1922.

10. For a survey of recent researches, see A. D. Pusalkar's article in PIS, pp. 101-152, also Dandekar, *Ibid.*, pp. 52 f.

11. The dates given against the works are approximate and generally the most accepted ones. They are, however, tentative, as many " pins set up only to be bowled down ! " (Whitney).

12. The edition here used is that of the Bombay Sanskrit Series ed. H. M. and R. G. Bhadkamkar (2 vols.).

13. Ed. and Trans. A. A. Macdonell (HOS vols. 5 and 6, 1904).

(*d*) Kātyāyana's Sarvānukramaṇī (350 B.C.) with the Vedārthadīpikā of Ṣaḍguruśiṣya[14] (1187 A.D.).

(*e*) Sāyaṇa's Vedārthaprakāśa,[15] being the commentary on the RV (1350 A.D.).

(*f*) Nītimañjarī[16] of Dyā Dviveda (1594 A.D.).

(*g*) The Epics—Rāmāyaṇa[17] and Mahābhārata.[18]

(*h*) Purāṇas[19] like Brahma, Viṣṇu, Vāyu, Bhāgavata etc. all of which are said to date from 400 A.D.

It may be remembered that the Ṛgveda-Samhitā does not narrate any legend ; but it is replete with allusions to numerous stories and episodes. These have been recounted and amplified in later Vedic and post-Vedic literature. We see the first attempts at narration in the Bhāhmaṇas ;[20] the Sunaśśepa legend, for instance, is fully narrated in the Aitareya which is said to be the oldest of its class. Its Ṛgvedic basis is a mere reference to Śunaśśepa's deliverance from the stakes. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra both had enemies against whom they poured curses, but it is not known to the RV whether they hated each other. Similarly, the story of Saramā is hinted in outlines only in the Family-maṇḍalas. The dialogue between her and the Paṇis in the tenth maṇḍala (RV X 108)[21] provides however an artistic setting for the story.

During the post-Vedic period, tradition has been recorded in some cases, but briefly, by Yāska. Perhaps a younger contemporary of the authors of the Sūtras, his style has naturally been aphoristic. It could not be otherwise in the case of the Sarvānukramaṇī (350 B.C.) also, which is in the nature of a comprehensive index to the Ṛgveda. It had had to comprise in the small compass of a sentence which should easily lend itself to be memorised, things like the prātīka, ṛṣi, devatā,

14. Ed. with notes. A. A. Macdonell (Anecdota Oxoniensia) Oxford, 1886.

15. Max Müller, 2nd edn. Oxford 1892. The Vaidika Samśodhana Maṇḍala (Poona) edition was recently completed and published (4 vols.). [As we go to the Press the 5th (Indices) volume has also been published 1951].

16. Ed. S. J. Joshi (Benares) 1933—Hari Har Maṇḍal, Kālabhairava, Benares City.

17. Nirnayasagar Edition with com. " Tilaka " (1922) and that of Gorresio (Italy).

18. BORI and Citraśālā editions, Poona. The former is the famous Critical Edition inaugurated by R. G. Bhandarkar in 1917, published to the end of Bhīṣma-parva. [Of late, Karṇa and Śānti have appeared in parts]. The latter is a complete publication in 7 vols. (including Harivamśa) with the commentary of Nīlakaṇṭha.

19. Mostly Ānandāśrama editions, some Nirṇayasāgar ; Bhāgavata by E. Burnouf (Incomplete ; up to end of 9 Skandhas only). Good critical editions of all the Purāṇas are a dire necessity.

20. The Brāhmaṇas, besides amplifying some of the stories alluded to in the Samhitās, themselves originated a number of them to illustrate or support the various aspects of the Sacrifice. Any new technique meant the weaving of an old story to speak of its efficacy.

21. RV X 108 is itself a Brāhmaṇa-like amplification of the episode which was hinted by earlier Seers, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Ātreya and others. Note that Paṇis and Saramā are themselves the Ṛṣi and the Devatā for the hymn : (Paṇyuktau Saramā devī taduktau Paṇayas tathā). The real author or Seer is anonymous.

chandas, and finally an episode or legend if any; hence its brevity.[22]

The Bṛhaddevatā of Śaunaka (400 B.C.) happens to be a very useful source-book. It is mainly devoted to an enumeration of the deities of the RV in categorical order. But it comprises other matter also. The introduction which occupies the first chapter and three-quarters of the second, provides an interesting grammatical discussion closely related to the Nirukta and dealing with particles, propositions, nouns, pronouns, compounds and the analysis of words together with a criticism of Yāska's errors in dividing words. In the main body of the work is interspersed a considerable amount of other matter, notably about forty legends[23] meant to explain the circumstances in which the hymns they were connected with, were composed. About 300 ślokas, or approximately one-fourth of the whole work, are devoted to these legends. Narrated in epic style, they form the oldest systematic collection of legends which we possess in Sanskrit.

Sāyaṇa's commentary, Vedārthaprakāśa, is a mine of legendary information. Under the ægis of this versatile scholar,[24] a band of profound scholars joined and wrote commentaries on all the sacred works, saṁhitās, brāhmaṇas, Śrauta Sūtras etc. and also works of a secular nature.[25] Just as the rise of Vijayanagara marked the revival of Hindu power, so also Sāyaṇa's literary efforts marked the resuscitation of ancient Sanskrit Literature.

Lastly, we have the Nītimañjarī of Dyā Dviveda (1494 A.D.). This work is a "collection of some 166 ethical maxims" illustrated as a rule by events and stories of the Vedic period. Relevant mantras and hymns from the RV are quoted and

22. Ṣaḍguruśiṣya (1187 A.D.), commentator of Sarvā. has related 23 legends in the course of his commentary known as Vedārthadīpikā (See p. 210 for a list). The name of this scholiast is impressive. According to Macdonell, his real name is not known, he was truly a disciple of six teachers whom he mentions at the end of com. (p. 168). They taught him seven books of knowledge: Vināyakaś Śūlapāṇir Mukundaḥ Sūryo Vyāsaḥ Śivayogī ca ṣaḍ vai / Namāmi tān sarvadā pāntu māṁ te yair vai ṣaḍbhis sapta vidyās tu dattāḥ // Ādyā Sarvānukramaṇī dvitīyā mahāvrataṁ copaniṣaddvayam ca / Mahāvratam sūtram āsāṁ tṛtīyā catvāriṁśadbrāhmaṇam (Aitareya Brāhmaṇa) vai caturthī // Sūtram pañcamyatra ṣaṣṭhī tu gṛhyam Śākalyasya saṁhitā saptamīti / Imā dattā vidyās tu ṣaḍbhir yair vai ṣaḍbhyo gurubhyo hi namo'stu tebhyaḥ // One wonders whether these were real names—Vināyaka, Śūlapāṇi, Mukunda, Sūrya, Vyāsa and Śivayogī. This Pupil of Six Teachers lived in an age of intense literary activity (1187 A.D.) and himself rose to fame by his erudition and writings. It looks somewhat fictitious that not one of this group has otherwise been known in literary tradition. The names mentioned might represent presiding deities to whom the author was devoted. The first four had become the foremost gods in the religious conception and daily life by the 12th century. The fifth Vyāsa is the mythical compiler of all ancient books. The Sixth, perhaps, was a real person or the Spiritual Entity that he had conceived as a result of his profound learning.

23. *Vide* BD p. 132 for a list of them. Macdonell's edition of BD. is a model in the art and science of editing. Editing ancient oriental texts is considered to be a highly complicated task. Distinguished scholars, specially in the West, have put forth their best efforts in the field for over a century and a half. The principles and methods evolved out of such a long period of practical work have been illuminatingly set forth in the "Introduction to Indian Textual Criticism" by Dr. S. M. Katre (DCPRI, Poona) 1941.

24. *Cf.* P. D. Gune, Sāyaṇa's commentary—its composition. Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes: Vol. III Orientaila Part 3 (1927), pp. 467-77. The idea is that the com. is not the work of one hand, but many co-operated to bring out the great work, under the general editorship of Sāyaṇa. The present writer has adduced further proof in his article "The Ṛgvedic word Parvata" contributed to the Prof. M. Hiriyanna Commemoration Volume (in the Press), Mysore. [Since published].

25. Works like Mādhavīya-dhātu-vṛtti, Kālamādhavīya, Bindu-mādhavīya etc.

commented upon, largely borrowing from Sāyaṇa's commentary. Once Keith demurred[26] at the idea of editing Nītimañjarī on the ground that there was little originality and less of contribution to knowledge in it. Though this is not wholly untrue, one feels that his decision against its publication was somewhat harsh. The importance of the work would have been evident if only its precursors like BD and Sarvā. had still to be unearthed. For the preservation of knowledge and continuity of tradition, it is indisputable that works, even of the nature of digests or compilations, need to be prepared and published from time to time. The one feature of the Nītimañjarī is that the illustrations are taken from the Veda only. For our purpose, we shall take account of it for additional corroboration of Vedic references.

Macdonell and Keith's " Vedic Index of Names and Subjects " is an indispensable guide to the student of Vedic antiquity. The authors' claim[27] is quite justified that " it would include all information that can be extracted from Vedic literature on such topics as agriculture, astronomy, burial, caste, clothing, crime, diseases, economic conditions, food and drink, gambling, kingship, law and justice, marriage, morality, occupations, polyandry and polygamy, the position of women, usury, village communities, war, wedding ceremonies, widow-burning, witchcraft and many others. The proper names would embrace not only persons, tribes and peoples, but also mountains, rivers and countries. The geographical distribution of the Vedic population would thus also be presented." The special merit of the work is that the authors being themselves profound scholars of Sanskrit have not only culled out references from all available texts in an exhaustive manner, but also have recorded up-to-date results of comparative and critical investigations on various subjects and aspects bearing on the Veda.

In estimating the value of the Epics and the Purāṇas for a historical study,[28] the view is generally held that sound conclusions are possible when only critical

26. *Vide* Keith : JRAS 1900, pp: 127-36. Keith has made a thorough examination of the work and one is obliged to, even after perusing the publication of it in Benares, agree entirely with his findings. Dyā wrote the Nītimañjarī in 1444 A.D. Writing just a century after the Vedic revival in Vijayanagara under the leadership of Mādhava and Sāyaṇa, may it be that Dyā was echoing the Sāyaṇa tradition ? It has been said above that the Sāyaṇa-Mādhava output could not have been single-handed. A number of scholars should have worked under them as in an Academy. If Mukunda Dviveda, great-grandfather of Dyā was a repository of Vedic lore, he might have well-nigh directly contributed to the great revival, at least as a junior contemporary of Sāyaṇa. Dviveda's abode was Ānanda, according to a verse in the work. If it is a place-name, it need not be in Gujarat only or in the heights of Kashmir. It may be somewhere in the south as well. There is an Ānandapuram in Mysore State near the Bombay border, not very far from old Vijayanagar (Hampi) ; and there are Vājasaneyins and Ṛk-śākhins in good number. The Uvata association was dismissed by Keith as untenable. The point is whether the family could be related to the Sāyaṇa School directly, in which case the portion of the Vedabhāṣya contained in the Nīti may have been Dyā's family inheritance. But we must have further corroboration.

27. See p. vii VI Vol. I. It is a surprise, however, that the learned authors do not include Saramā in the Index. Macdonell has omitted to mention her name even in his HSL. (1900). She should find a place at least as a " heavenly animal " or a mythical entity. Suparṇa has been included (vol. II p. 455) ! It seems to me to be an unaccountable omission.

28. For a thoroughly dependable account, reference may be made to Winternitz HIL vol. I (1927) : section on Epics and Purāṇas, pp. 311-606. The findings of pioneer scholars like Wilson and later of Holtzmann, Dahlmann, Jacobi, Hopkins and others have been well digested and, may we add, fair conclusions arrived at by Winternitz. His enthusiastic efforts before the International Congress of Orientalists to set afoot a critical edition of the Mahābhārata culminated in the present BORI undertaking.

editions of the texts are made available. No definite period of composition can be fixed for these works, because, through centuries they have been subjected to additions and alterations with the result that they have grown in bulk. As it has proved in the case of the Mahābhārata, it is an arduous task to bring out critical editions. All the same the necessity for them is beyond question, if a systematic insight into the currents and cross currents of our culture is to be gained. At present, however, all observations based on the versions found in the Epics and the Purāṇas will have to be made with due caution.

The importance and popularity of these works, indeed, can, in no way, be lost sight of. They are the bed-rock of Hindu civilization. The Mahābhārata, specially, is not only an epic, not only a work of poetic art (kāvya), but also, as Winternitz puts it, " a manual (Śāstra) of morality, law and philosophy, supported by the oldest tradition (smṛti) and hence furnished with incontestible authority; and since more than 1,500 years it has served the Indians as much for entertainment as for instruction and edification."[29]

The Rāmāyaṇa was exposed in a far less degree to tampering by later hands. It could therefore, in spite of the first and seventh books, which are considered to be later additions, be still viewed as a compact work, when compared with the Mbh. Whereas the latter assumed grand proportions as it had to record the destinies of a whole race *i.e.* of the Kauravas bestirring the three worlds,[30] the former described the life-story of one hero, Śrī Rāma, who has been described as an embodiment of human perfection. Rāmāyaṇa, though less voluminous than the sister epic, is still a valuable book of human experience, less unwieldy but none-the-less full of æsthetic appeal. If we may so describe, Rāmāyaṇa is for the Individual, Mahābhārata is for the Nation. More than before, the need is now great that the country should look back at these storehouses of culture and bring to bear a proper reorientation on the future outlook.

" The Purāṇas belong to the religious literature and are, for the later Indian religion which is generally called Hinduism and which culminates in the worship of Śiva and Viṣṇu, approximately what the Veda is for the oldest religion or Brāhmanism."[31] They are closely connected with the epic compositions and further elaborate the legends contained therein to suit their own purpose. There has been no rule or restraint for such accretions, for even in later times, books are fabricated which assume the proud title "purāṇa," or claim to be parts of ancient Purāṇas. As Winternitz puts it, they are " new wine in old bottles."

" The Purāṇas are confessedly partly legendary and partly historical. The descriptions of superhuman beings and of other worlds than this, are glorified

29. HIL I, p. 321.

30. *Cf.* Bāṇa:
Kim kaves tasya kāvyena sarvavṛttāntagāminā
Katheva bhāratī yasya na vyāpnoti jagattrayam //
—Harṣacarita (Introd. ślokas).

31. Winternitz, HIL, p. 517.

accounts of the unknown founded on the analogy of the known. They are the products of an imaginative and uncritical age in which men were not careful to distinguish fact from legend. It is the task of modern criticism to disentangle the two elements. Its first object should be to remove from the existing Purāṇas all later additions, and then form a comparison of their oldest portions to determine the relations in which they stand to one another and thus, as far as possible, to restore their common tradition to its original form."[32]

IV

LINES OF INVESTIGATION

One need not aspire for any novel finds in the study of the legends. They are repeated again and again in successive generations; perhaps, repetition is their strong point. Repetition and reconstruction being their regular features they bear a study ever and anon. So much has been written in the past by eminent scholars. The present study is a humble attempt to know them as far as possible. Hence the writer submits :

Kati kavayaḥ kati kṛtayaḥ kati luptāḥ kati caranti kati śithilāḥ /
Tad api pravartayati mām nigamoktākhyānasamvidhānchā //[33]

The study of ancient lore has to be approached with faith, free from modern materialistic prejudices which have hampered true appreciation and rendered criticism more destructive than constructive. Those who indulge in the destructive type had better keep away; it is in this spirit that the parable of Goddess Vidyā is repeated by several Vedic schools for the edification of the earnest student :

Vidyā ha vai brāhmaṇam ājagāma
Gopāya mā śevadhiṣṭe'ham asmi /
Asūyakāyānṛjave'yatāya
Na mā brūyā vīryavatī tathā syām //

Ya ātṛṇattyavitathena karṇā-
Vaduḥkham kurvannamṛtam samprayacchan /
Tam manyeta pitaram mātaram ca
Tasmai na druhyet katamaccanāha //

Adhyāpitā ye gurum nādriyante
Viprā vācā manasā karmaṇā vā /
Yathaiva te na guror bhojanīyās
tathaiva tān na bhunakti śrutam tat //

Yam eva vidyāḥ śucim apramattam
Medhāvinam brahmacaryopapannam /

32. Rapson, CHI, Vol. p. 299.

33. Adapted from Nīlakaṇṭha-vijaya, the last quarter of the original being; Śaṅkara-pāramyasaṅkathālobhaḥ.

Yas te na druhyet katamaccanāha
Tasmai mā brūyā nidhipāya brahman //[34]

Goddess Vidyā once approached the Brāhmaṇa and said : 'Protect me, I am thy treasure. Impart me not to any one who is envious, not straightforward and who has no self-control, so will I remain a source of strength. (A student) should regard him, as father and as mother, who fills the ears with TRUTH without causing pain but pouring nectar. By no means should a student prove treacherous to him. Those vipras (learned pupils) who, though instructed, will not respect the Teacher in thought, word and deed shall deserve no favour from the Teacher; similarly, too, the knowledge (so obtained) shall not favour them. Therefore, O Brahman, thou shalt impart me only to him who will keep the trust, whom thou thinkest to be pure and not heedless, intelligent and devoted to his duties as a student and who would by no means prove treacherous to thee.'

Mythology, in general, may be described as a historical and scientific study of myths and legends ; the whole body of divine, heroic and cosmogonic legends come under its purview. Myths and legends are classified as meteorological, physical, historical, ritualistic, artistic, ethical, mystical, or allegorical and so on. Myths are traditional, having had their source often in individual imagination. Psychologically, the function of myth, is to strengthen tradition and endow it with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better and more supernatural reality of ancient events. "From myth spring the epic romance and tragedy. Myth, therefore, touches the deepest desires of man --his fears, his hopes, his passions, his sentiments as it validates the social order, justifies the existing social scheme and ranges from expressions of sheer artistry to legalism."

Myth in common parlance savours of what is untrue, unreal, all the same it has a hold on man's imagination. There is a certain amount of rational element in it, as, for instance, in the myths relating to the Dawn and the Sun. Sometimes, the irrational element, as in the story of the Creator himself committing incest, renders a myth repugnant. Plato would reject such untrustworthy stories of gods from his ideal State !

The study of mythology is obscure and difficult but when rightly and cautiously pursued it abounds with evidence as to the primitive aspirations and beliefs of mankind and as to the various stages of moral and intellectual development.[35]

In the present study, by legend is meant a story which describes an ancient event in which the characters are from, or are akin to, mankind and in which, the emotions and experiences, such as those of human beings are described. In this way, it differs from a myth which is more often than not a fanciful representation of a

34. Quoted by Sāyaṇa—' Śākhāntaragataiḥ caturbhir mantraiḥ '—at the end of his Introduction to the RV commentary. The verses are found in VDhS (BSS XXIII 3rd edn. 1930 BORI) II 8-11.

35. The above is based on the views expressed in the Encyc. Britannica and ERE. What is said of the myth equally applies to legend.

natural phenomenon. Thus the solar and lunar myths were brought home by Max Müller in his numerous writings. Sometimes, indeed, a concrete legend, like that of Saramā or Purūravas, was harnessed into a myth. Saramā, Indra's messenger (Indrasya dūtīḥ)—not the watch-dog of the gods (devaśunī) as she somehow came to be designated later—went to the Paṇis and demanded the release of Indra's cattle ; with Saramā as guide, Indra found the Paṇis, destroyed them and recovered the cattle. These concrete lines are rendered into evanescent myth stating that Saramā the Dawn, signalling the dispelling of darkness, heralds the advent of Indra's cattle *viz.* the Sun's rays. The immortal lovers, Purūravas and Urvaśī, are, mythically, the Sun and the Dawn. The birth of the sage Vasiṣṭha from Urvaśī is, again, the birth of the Sun from the Dawn. Which to choose and cherish, legend or myth, mankind decided ; the myth gradually receded to the background but the legend held on. It caught the imagination of men and began to thrive on it, being harnessed at will for their own ends and purposes. For when man began to narrate a story, he put his own mind into it, so much so the original outlines were entirely missed or misrepresented. But then the history of the legends proves that they are almost beside the truth ; why should they be studied ? It is precisely to know the real basis of the legends, the transformation that time wrought upon them, the consistency and the logical necessity of such transformation and finally the reaction of the people who stored them as a rich heritage.

V

ITIHĀSA-TRADITION

Our legends have a hoary past; their roots extend to the Vedas themselves. Known by the comprehensive name, Itihāsa (iti ha āsa=thus, indeed, it was), they constituted a necessary adjunct to the four Vedas, because, Itihāsa is described as the fifth Veda.[36] According to Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra,[37] Itihāsa comprises purāṇa (old legends), itivṛtta (history), ākhyāyikā (fables), udāharaṇa (illustrative stories), dharmaśāstra (codes of law) and arthaśāstra (political science). The king is expected to spend the afternoon in listening to these sources of knowledge. Thus Itihāsa gives us the impression that it is not a single work but a species of literary productions. But this range was acquired by the time of Kauṭilya (4th cent. B.C. ?) In the early literature, we find numerous references to Itihāsa, Purāṇa and Itihāsa-purāṇa etc. But if they were actually composed, they do not exist today. Max Müller[38] thought that the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mbh. have taken their place and

36. Chāndogya-Up. VII 1 f and 7, Buddhist Suttanipāta III 7, both referred to by Winternitz. HIL p. 313 and n2, 3.

37. " Sāmargyajurvedās trayas trayī / Atharvavedetihāsavedau ca vedāḥ / " K. Artha. I 3. " Pūrvam aharbhāgam hastyaśvarathapraharaṇavidyāsu vinayam gacchet / Paścimam itihāsaśravaṇe / Purāṇam itivṛttam ākhyāyikodāharaṇam Dharmaśāstram Arthaśāstram cetītihāsaḥ / " *Ibid.* I 5 *cf.* HIL p. 313 n.4. As species of literature which go by the name of Veda, may be mentioned Āyurveda, Dhanurveda and Gāndharvaveda. *Cf.* also Amara (I vi. 4) ' itihāsaḥ purāvṛttam ' = what happened before, an event of the past. By the time of this definition, all the words were taken as synonymous—itihāsa, itivṛtta, purāṇa, ākhyāna etc. *Cf.* again HIL p. 311 note.

38. Hibbert Lectures, p. 154 note. Also " India, what can it teach us ? ", pp. 88-89.

that the later Purāṇas even may contain materials, though much altered, of what was called in Vedic literature, the Purāṇas. It is one view that the old itihāsas of the Vedic period were handed by oral tradition only; they had no fixed text. On the other hand, Sieg thinks that its vestiges are found scattered over the different branches of Vedic literature, the Brāhmanas, the Sūtras etc.[39] If we reflect upon the whole problem, the existence of an Itihāsa-tradition even at the time of the Ṛgvedic compilation, nay, even before when the hymns were being seen or composed, cannot be doubted. It did not require a Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa to narrate the legends in assemblies, for in the life of the Vedic community and the extent of its holdings which were limited, the stories were well-known and did not require any discourse thereupon. But later on there came the Age of the Brāhmaṇas which was dominated by ritual. Looking at the laborious exegetical attempts and far-fetched grammatical fancies of this ritual literature, one is driven to suspect a long break in Vedic tradition,[40] with the result that fact was substituted by fancy in the reconstruction of old tradition (purāṇa). Purāṇa assumed a definite status and came to be considered a regular part of any sacrificial programme.[41] As time rolled on, the Itihāsa grew in proportion and finally was set down to record through the Epics and Purāṇas.

By the time of Yāska, a regular class of thinkers is recognised called the Aitihāsikas.[42] They interpreted the Veda from the legendary point of view. For other points of view, there were the Niruktas[43] (etymologists), Yājñikas[44] and Pūrve-yājñikas[45] (Sacrificial school, old and new), and the Vaiyākaraṇas[46] (Grammarians). To this we should add an Astronomical school (Jyautiṣakas) who attempt to locate a star in the firmament for every hero of the Veda. We have heard of the most popular story of Orion being no other than the famous Ikṣvāku king Triśaṅku. In the same manner other constellations also, it must be possible to identify; hence the origin and growth of a series of legends always harping upon the starry heavens. It is not a very popular school, though as is seen in individual cases, it became a regular hobby of a few scholars. Remarkable are Dr. R. Shama Sastry's books and articles in this direction, contributed to various journals in India.[47] With the spread of Vedic studies in the West, a new school of interpretation was initiated by Rudolph Roth, which may be designated as the Philological or Linguistic

39. ERE Sieg's article on Itihāsa.

40. *Cf.* M. Hiriyanna : Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 29 also ASL, pp. 432-34. Witness the extent of amplification that the Śunaśśepa Legend received at the hands of ' tradition ' from RV to AB.

41. ASL p. 40. At the Aśvamedha, on the eighth day, the itihāsas are recited and on the ninth, the purāṇas. The word aitihya is used in TA (I 1.2) to signify tradition in a very wide sense : Sāyaṇa explains—itihāsa-purāṇa-mahābhārata-brāhmaṇādikam !

42. Nir. II 16, III 1, 10.

43. Referred to twenty times.

44. Nir. V 11, VII 4, XI 29, 31, 42, 43.

45. VII 23.

46. I 12, IX 5.

47. *Vide* Dandekar's Vedic Bibliography. Index of Authors, p. 383.

School.[48] According to this School, the Vedic Language should be understood on its own authority, bringing to bear the kinship of other Indo-Aryan languages; should not trust to Sāyaṇa only who is " the blind man's stick " in the path of Vedic Exegesis. Wilson, Colebrooke[49] and others recognised a Traditional School, reflected in the Commentary of Sāyaṇa whom the former considered as the safest guide through the intricacies and obscurities of the text. This classification is not complete if a reference is not made to some scholars who perceive nothing but philosophy in the Vedic mantras. They form the Ādhyātmika or Philosophic School.[50] Of the eight Schools of Vedic Thought and Interpretation adverted to above, viz. :

Nairuktas (Etymologists)
Yājñikas (Ritualists)
Vaiyākaraṇas (Grammarians)
Jyautiṣakas (Astronomers)
Bhāṣāvids (Linguists of the West)
Sampradāyavids (Traditionists)
Adhyātmavids (Philosophers), and
Aitihāsikas (' Legendarians ')

the first seven became the province of the student and the specialist, while the last came to edify the common man. Thus developed the vast literature of the Epics and the Purāṇas to entertain and instruct the commonalty. Regarding Vedic interpretation, the present outlook is one of *via media.* It takes into account all the aspects above recapitulated before deciding upon the meaning of a passage. With the researches of Maurice Bloomfield on the subject of " Ṛgevda Repetitions,"[50a] a study of all the contexts in which a pāda or a verse occurred, became necessary, with very satisfactory results. Thus a critical and comparative outlook, which does not lose sight of the tradition or sampradāya, characterises the modern method of interpreting the Veda.[51]

VI

THE PLACE OF LEGEND IN NATIONAL LIFE

It must be noted that no story is actually told in the Ṛgveda, but many incidents and circumstances are definitely alluded to. Saramā and the Paṇis, Urvaśī

48. *Cf.* Interpretation of the Ṛgveda, Dr. Manilal Patel. Bhāratīya Vidyā Vol. I, p. 17 *et seq.* The contribution of various scholars, schools and commentaries have been discussed.

49. Wilson in his preface to the RV Translation. Colebrooke, Asiatic Researches (1805) VIII, p. 476.

50. *Cf.* The Veda and its Interpretation, Principal A. B. Dhruva. Mālavīya Commemoration Volume (BHU, 1932), pp. 447-58.

50a. The Repetitions " are of interest not only for the direct explanation of many a given passage, but also for a critical comparison and estimate of the repeated matter in a given hymn as confronted with that of all the other hymns which are concerned in these repetitions. These are considerably more important than the variants in other Vedic texts, interesting as these are for the history of schools, the development of the language, and the later growth of Brahmanical ideas." Rigveda Repetitions (HOS Vol. 20, p. xix, vol. 24 forms the 2nd part of the work).

51. *Cf.* Macdonell, The Principles to be followed in translating the Ṛgveda (Commemorative Essays presented to R. G. Bhandarkar, BORI, 1917), pp. 8-18.

and Purūravas legends are nearer being actual events than perhaps Śunaśśepa being yoked for sacrifice or Viśvāmitra having developed a hatred for Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra each had enemies but it is not certain whether they were enemies of each other. While for the truthful happenings we turn our eyes to the most original document the Ṛgveda, the gradual transformation which sometimes changed the complexion in toto is not without significance inasmuch as it reflects the cultural phases in the fortunes of the Aryans in India and their thorough assimilation with the native populace. The original purity of concept and character had had to be mixed up with the complicated and undeveloped notions that prevailed in the atmosphere of their new possessions. The same stories had to be retold and reinterpreted. Gods and men sat together at the sacrifices in the Vedic Age, but later the distance between god and man began to widen. Man expanded, propagated and became a problem for himself. Far removed from divinity he was naturally to doubt it. Fresh impetus had to be put into Vedic lore–thus grew the several strata of literature and legend which were evolved from time to time, spontaneously, to hold together the peoples and their beliefs.

Thus in the beginning, gods came to the earth often times; it was their sporting ground. But when the land became crowded with mortals, the visits of the immortals became few and far between. They had to be summoned with great ceremony and sacrifice or after severe self-mortification by a process called penance. It was the privilege of some, however, to visit the Immortals in heaven off and on for negotiations on behalf of mankind ; a few celebrated kings were even honoured with invitations to help the gods in their fights against the demons. Later on this choice for divine favour also became a thing of the past. Gods became invisible and would of course favour their devotee as such, provided he faithfully discharged all his duties by them as required by the śāstras. When Gods disappeared from mortal approach, śāstras about them became more and more elaborate ; thus worship of the God at home and in common with the others at temples became an art by itself substituting for the no longer tenable Sacrifice. As the community expanded, their wants became many and varied ; their functions also differed accordingly. Their outlook now was more mundane. Now and then, of course, the hunger of the soul asserted itself ; the monotony of existence, the transitoriness of life, birth and death, above all, the futility of appeal to an invisible God—these ideas began to sway over the mind of the commonalty. At such a time, the service rendered by the epics and the Purāṇas for enlivening the souls of the people can hardly be exaggerated. Here did Lomaharṣaṇa[52] earn the gratitude of all, by presenting the ancient legends to the people in a manner that pleased their minds and whetted their hearts' yearning for a tangible knowledge, if not vision, of the Ultimate or the Absolute. The continuity of the teachings of the sacred Vedas was also established by the dictum—

52. The Vāyu Purāṇa justifies his name (I 16) :

Lomāni harṣayāñcakre śrotīṇām yat subhāṣitaiḥ /
Karmaṇā prathitas tena loke'smin Lomaharṣaṇaḥ //

Itihāsapurāṇābhyām Vedam samupabṛmhayet /
Bibhetyalpaśrutād vedo mām ayam prahared iti //[53]

The Veda should be well amplified by means of Itihāsa and Purāṇa; the Veda fears a man of little knowledge as he might maim it thereby.

Thus the popular mind was satisfied with the sanctity of the Epics and the Purāṇas as they were, logically, exhaustive commentaries of the Veda and its tradition. Even otherwise, the medium of legend to communicate religious and even philosophical ideas has been found fruitful through Ages. Nothing can exert greater credence on the human mind than when it is described as having happened. "Thus, indeed, it was" (Iti-ha-āsa) combines with narration, a stamp of authority. And when, now and then, an appeal is made to former authorities by means of statements like, Atrāpyudāharantīmam itihāsam purātanam etc., the belief is firmly rooted. Philosophers, who claim to think of God from a higher plane on the strength of having imbibed the quintessence of worldly experience separating the grain from the chaff, are prone to set less value to the legends, as, they say, for instance, Plato would allow no foothold for the fanciful myths about gods and angels in his ideal State. But, for the average man with his preoccupations—and his class forms the teeming millions—a set of prepared ideas about the Supreme Power is necessary, ideas which emanate from thinkers or prophets who have had communion with the Holy God. The average man, again, would feel gratified to find some concrete story on which his Faith can lay anchor, or even some concrete object on which he can superimpose all his conception of God, the Gracious and the All-powerful. This deep yearning of the soul is represented by what Prof. Otto calls the "numinous" in man, which feels or realises and is fascinated by the adbhuta and the acintya in God (Mysterium tremendum); and which ultimately leads him to rapturous emotions of love and surrender (bhakti) to the great God.[54] The temple and the church on the one hand and the Sāgas and the Epics on the other have proved to be substantial contributions to foster the "numinous," and have, therefore, very rightly deserved the popularity they enjoy. If a nation is to be united it is by the TRADITION it inherits and cherishes. And India's unshakable belief and regard for tradition has been writ large in the Great Epics and in the Purāṇas and has been upheld by the sky-scraping towers of temples.

One great point about Itihāsa is that it appeals to all classes. Unfortunately, India is torn by an abuse of the Caste System. Whether the Caste System (cāturvarṇya) was responsible for the degradation of Indian Society, or an abuse thereof, is a matter of opinion. All the same, the distinction of varṇa (caste) by the accident of birth and not by the actuality of profession has been the bane of our social structure. True, there is the doctrine of Karma to support the distinction by birth. It is agelong and has been a potent factor of our Religion. But our

53. Mbh. I 267.
54. *Cf.* M. Yāmunachārya, Prof. Rudolf Otto's concept of the "Numinous" and its relation to Indian Thought. (Read before the XIX Session of the Indian Philosophical Congress and published by Mysore U. J. Vol. VII, No. 2, March 1947).

Religion and our Country are in a transitional stage. A New Order of things is inevitable. And God's original order conveyed in the following statement:—

Na viśeṣo'sti varṇānām sarvam brāhmam idam jagat /
Brahmaṇā pūrvasṛṣṭam hi karmabhir varṇatām gatam //

"There is no distinction of castes: This world, which, as created by Brahmā, was at first entirely Brāhmanic, has become divided into classes in consequence of men's deeds."—deserves to be reharnessed for the good of humanity. Such upheavels have come upon us often times and the Smṛtis and the Śāstras have been alive for the changes and have conformed to them ; *e.g.* Parāśara-smṛti is to be followed in Kali-yuga, and not Manu, the first law-giver (Kalau Pārāśaraḥ smṛtaḥ). A fresh structure has to be built upon old traditions ; the great literature of the ancients, of which of course we can always be proud, has to be read in a new light which has just radiated through the horizon.

The sociological aspect of the legends is as important as their religious aspect. In them are reflected the successive stages of culture and civilisation. The Itihāsa-purāṇa as revealed in the Vedic texts gives us a picture of ancient Society, at least in its outlines. The next stages are marked by the appearnce of the Epics, of the Purāṇas and of belles-lettres, these categories being for the most part contemporaneous in the few centuries that preceded and succeeded the Christian era.

A third aspect of the legend is didactic. Through the stories of the lives of great men and through the teachings of sages and seers retold in simple mould and easy language, the Itihāsa provided ethical instruction to society, together with philosophical doctrines.

Incidental to these aspects, much miscellaneous matter also found its way into the Purāṇas like the genealogies of kings, their rule over various kingdoms of the historic and prehistoric past, the rivers and mountains, more than all the holy spots situated on them (tīrthas) etc. so much so that the Purāṇas developed a technique of their own, which expressed itself in the five characteristics :—

Sargaś ca pratisaragaś ca vamśo manvantarāṇi ca /
Vamśānucaritam ceti Purāṇam pañcalakṣaṇam //

—Creation ; re-creation *i.e.* periodical annihilation and renewal of the worlds ; genealogy (of gods and ṛṣis) ; the millennia *i.e.* the great periods each of which has a Manu or primal ancestor of the human race; and the history of the dynasties *viz.* early and later dynasties whose origin is traced back to the sun (solar dynasty) and the moon (lunar dynasty).[56] Thus we see that the legendary tradition, expressed through the medium of the Epics and the Purāṇas, knit itself into the life of Society, being a source at once of pleasure and instruction.

55. Mbh. XII 188.10. Quoted by Muir as a motto for his first volume OST. see back of title page (3rd edn. 1890).

56. *Cf.* Winternitz HIL I p. 502 and note. The śloka is found in the more important Purāṇas, in Amarakośa and other lexicons.

VII

THE AGE OF THE ṚGVEDA

A definite age for the RV in terms of years or even centuries before our time is not possible to fix, as is revealed by the most laborious enquiry up to now. The subject is hackneyed enough ; nevertheless, every scholar permits himself to enter into the subject, for, at one time or other in the course of his study, he is sure to wonder within his mind, what might be the age of the RV, which happens to be oldest literary monument of the Human Race ! In answer to this question, it is wise, perhaps, to say : RV is the oldest in age among literary productions, and be content.

What with the doctrine of Revelation (apauruṣeyatva) which recognised nothing like a beginning for the Veda, and with the data provided by the theory of yuga and mahāyuga, pralaya and mahāpralaya, the earthly year and the celestial year and so on ; what with, on the other hand, the linguistic, historical, archæological and astronomical evidences ransacked and wrested from their hidings with marvellous genius, industry and tact by the great scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—the Age of the RV is still a mirage to grapple with. The world of scholars bestirred itself once again after the discovery of the cuneiform tablets at Tel-el-Amarna in Upper Egypt and the discovery of the Inscriptions at Boghaz-Koi (North Mesopotamia) dating from 1600 to 1400 B.C.[57] They speak of names of Mitani kings with the prefix " Arta " which is reminiscent of Vedic Ṛta; and reference is found to the Vedic gods, Mitra, Varuṇa, Indra and Nāsatyau. This raised problems not only concerning the age of the RV, but also regarding the original home of the Aryans and the theory of their migration. In the opinion of Keith,[58] " misplaced confidence in the Parsi tradition which dates Zoroaster three hundred years before Alexander,[59] has resulted in endless confusion and difficulty."

On the evidence of the language of the Avesta which bears close resemblance to that of the RV, the common belief is that the Aryans came down to Iran from their original home, Central Asia, and then a branch of theirs moved on to India. The activities of the Indian branch, the chief one being the compilation of RV Samhitā, began after their separation from the Iranian Settlements. The acceptance of this view has put an unjustly severe restraint on Vedic chronology. To squeeze in so much of literature and history from Zarathushtra's date—the Ṛgvedic compilation, the growth of the Brāhmaṇas, the Sūtras and the Upaniṣads, Yāska, Pāṇini, Mahāvīra, the Buddha, our Epics, and all before Alexander invaded India : 326 B.C.—is impossible ! Consider, on the other hand, the possibility of

57. *Cf.* Bloomfield, Rel. Veda, pp. 11-12. Keith RPV, pp. 5, 83, 617, Wintrenitz HIL pp. 304-6, Dhalla, HZ pp. 9, 47, 269, 270.

58. Bhand. Comm. Vol. Keith, Early History of the Indo-Iranians, pp. 81-92.

59. Date of Zoroaster according to tradition : 660-583 B.C. Dhalla states that Zarathushtra's date of birth is placed anywhere between 600 B.C. and 6000 B.C. HZ p. 18.

the migration of a branch of the Aryans westward into Iran from India.[60] The original home of the Aryans might have been in India itself or they might have come to India through some route, not necessarily Khyber. That is a major problem. At any rate having had a sufficiently long and comfortable life in the Land of the Five or Seven Rivers (Punjab and N.W.F.), one branch, evidently the dissenters, went westwards, whereas another spread eastward to Madhya-deśa and further to Bengal and down to the South. After the western branch migrated to Iran, soon or late, rose Zoroaster ; the Gāthās were sung in the language known as Avesta. Even then there should be no objection to the close resemblances between the Vedic and Avestic languages. Just as the eastern branch came in contact with the original inhabitants and underwent transformation in thought and doing, so also the Iranian section mingled with the native populace and became subject to new influences. Differences grew ; the outlook changed ; they became poles apart. Conflict and conquest followed as a natural result. Remembering their old hatred, as it were, there were in historic times a series of invasions and depredations back on their old home, India.

Now comes the discovery of the Indus Valley civilization[61] envisaged by the finds at Harappa and Mohenjodaro. No definite decision has yet been reached regarding its age in general or its age in relation to RV in particular. The most generally accepted view up to now is that it is pre-Ṛgvedic; some hold that it is based on the Ṛgvedic civilization only and that the unearthed cities and the seals betray contemporaneity with features and events of Ṛgvedic life. There is a third postulate that the I-V Culture is entirely Dravidian in character. It is beside the present purpose to go into a discussion of the various problems and controversies, when the entire study thereof is still in a nebulous condition. The position is clearly set forth in the following passage :

" The finds unearthed at the prehistoric sites provide many interesting, important an intriguing points such as the date of the civilization ; its authorship—whether it is Aryan, pre-Aryan, Dravidian or Sumerian etc.; its relationship with

60. Keith is not unfavourable. *Cf.* RPV. 5-7, " we are, therefore, still left without any definite evidence to aid us in dating the distinction of Aryan into Iranian and Indian, and we should probably revise our conception of this division." *Ibid.* p. 617. Winternitz is quite favourable " We shall have to assume that, just as there were Aryan immigrations into India from the west, there must have been isolated migrations back to the west." HIL, p. 305. On the other hand, Dhalla claims : Of the various sections of the Aryan family, the ancestors of those that later became known in history as the Indians and the Iranians lived longest and closest together in Eastern Iran. They sacrificed to the same gods and entertained the same view of life on earth. They separated at a later period and a group turned to the south, crossed the Hindukush and entered the Punjab by about 2000 B.C.
......Of the various groups that separated from the main stock at different times, the Iranian group preserved most faithfully the original name of the primeval home of the Aryans. The place of residence had changed, surroundings had altered beyond recognition and the communities that lived and shared life with them had gone. But the deeply cherished name AIRYANA-VAYEJAH (The Stem-Land of the Aryans) had been indelibly impressed on their minds." HZ p. 10. On p. xxxi he says : " The time when Zoroaster flourished is a moot question. The approximate date at which he lived is 1000 B.C."

61. One is greatly indebted to Dr. R. N. Dandekar for a very useful bibliography on the I-V civilization. *Vide* his " Vedic Bibliography " (NIA publication, Bombay, 1946) Sections 156-162 or pp. 281-303.

other cultures; its extent; the religion and culture disclosed by it; the Indus Script, etc." And "a somewhat satisfactory solution of these problems can be obtained when we discover strata bearing on Vedic settlements and showing their relative chronological position to the Indus civilization. Excavation along the banks of Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī in the homeland of the Vedic Aryans will go a long way in providing ample valuable material. The satisfactory decipherment of the Indus Script which has hitherto baffled all attempts will give an unimpeachable and incontrovertible piece of evidence. Scholars have so long approached the problem with preconceived notions and consequently have read their own theories into the so-called Indus Seal writings. The discovery of a bi-lingual inscription will undoubtedly supply us with a clue to solve the mystery which is shrouding the problems."[62]

Reverting to the Age of the Ṛgveda,[63] we can only register the dates assigned by various scholars from 1000 B.C. to 25000 B.C. Max Müller assigned 1500–1200, Weber 16th cent., Haug 2400–1400, Whitney 2000–1400, Kaegi 2000–1500, Winternitz, 2500 or 2000–750 or 500, Jacobi 4500–2500, Tilak 6000, Veṅkaṭeśvara 11,000 and A.C. Dās 25,000 etc. —all before Christ. It is well to recall a statement made by Max Müller himself long ago. "It is far better to show the different layers of thought that produced the Vedic Religion, and thus to give an approximate idea of its long growth, than to attempt to measure it by years or centuries, which can never be more than guess work."[64] What applies to Vedic Thought applies to Vedic Literature as well.

VIII

ṚGVEDIC LEGENDS

These are numerous indeed. Śaunaka's Bṛhaddevatā is a land-mark in the study of the legends as it is the most ancient text to narrate, briefly of course, as many as forty legends, which are amplifications of the Ṛgvedic nucleus. The Sarvānukramaṇī of Kātyāyana offers similar material; Ṣaḍguruśiṣya expands many of the legends. Finally, Sāyaṇa's prefatory notes to the hymns referring to past stories are very helpful.

With a survey of Sāyaṇa's commentary, the vast legendary matter could be gathered. Over seventy-five adventures of Indra are mentioned. Apart from the display of his strength against his adversaries, Indra, as is well-known, freely and bounteously bestows wealth upon the sacrificer. He also helps people in distress. In this respect, the record of the Aśvins is as bright if not brighter. They are the divine physicians and surgeons who have made themselves responsible for the well-being of all in their province. They supply artificial legs to those who are wounded in battle, they save people from shipwreck and remove blindness and

62. A. D. Pusalkar, Indus Valley Civilization, Bhāratīya Vidyā, Vol. III, Part I, pp. 21-22.

63. For a full discussion, *vide* Winternitz HIL I pp. 290-310. *Cf.* also Radhakrishnan Eastern Religion and Western Thought. pp. 119-20 fn.

64. Max Müller, Hibbert Lectures, p. 156.

barrenness. They cure leprosy and rescue those caught in the fire but, what is more wonderful, they transplant the head of a horse on the human body and again replace the original head. These achievements are remarkable and striking in their amazing similarity to the achievements of the latest researches in medicine and surgery.

Besides the expolits of individual deities as above illustrated, 29 legends of a more general character could be noted. They are as follows:—

1. Saramā I 6.5.
   Śunaśśepa I 24·1.
   Kakṣīvat and Svanaya I 125.
   Dīrghatamas I 147.
5. Agastya and Lopāmudrā I 179.
   Gṛtsamada II 12.
   Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra III 53, VII 33 etc.
   The Descent of Soma III 43.
   Vāmadeva IV 18.
10. Tryaruṇa and Vṛśa Jāna V 2.
   Birth of Agni V 11.
   Śyāvāśva V 52.
   Saptavadhri V 78.
   Bṛbu and Bharadvāja VI 45.
15. Ṛjiśvan and Atiyāja VI 52.
   Sarasvatī and Vadhryaśva VI 61.
   Viṣṇu's three strides VI 69.
   Birth of Bṛhaspati VI 71.
   King Sudās VII 18 etc.
20. Nahuṣa VII 95.
   Asaṅga VIII 1, 33.
   Apālā VIII 91.
   Kutsa X 38 (I 33, 51, 97 etc.)
   King Asamāti and the four priests X 57-60.
25. Nābhānediṣṭha X 61, 62.
   Vṛṣākapi X 86.
   Urvaśī and Purūravas X 95.
   Devāpi and Śantanu X 98.
   Naciketas X 135.

The "dānastutis" praising Pākasthāman, Kuruṅga, Kaśu, Tirindira, Trasadasyu, Citra, Varu, Pṛthuśravas, Ṛkṣa and Aśvamedha, Indrota and Atithigva etc. (VIII Maṇḍala) should naturally refer to events which led to the gifts and their praise, but they are not counted in the above list as they afford, historically, little matter for study. Similarly, the various adventures of Indra and the Aśvins, somehow, were not followed up in later literature. It may however be of interest to recall some of them here: they make a short biography of the gods concerned.

Indra :—Maruts are his allies (I 6.7, 33·4),[65] Indra born as Kuśika's son (I 10·11) destorys demon cities (I 11·4), slays vala and releases cattle (11.5), kills Śuṣṇa (11·7), Indra-Vṛtra fight narrated in some detail (I 32), clove the cloud, cast the water down, killed Vṛtra, recovered the kine from the Paṇis, won the Soma—all allied with the Maruts; Vṛtra's followers fled, Indra was encouraged by the Navagvas (1·33), Maruts stood fast by Indra when all others fled (51·2) once Indra almost collapsed but recovered with a draught of Soma (52·10). Indra protected Kutsa, defended Daśadyu, redeemed Śvaitya (33·14-15), helped Angiras, Atri and Vimala (51·3), destroyed the cities of Pipru and well defended Ṛjiśvan, defended Kutsa against Śuṣṇa, destroyed Śambara in defence of Atithigva, trod upon the demon Arbuda (51·6), helped the sage Vimada (51·9), delights at the sacrifice of Śāryāta, gave Vṛśaya to Kakṣīvat (51·12-13), broke through the defences of Bala (52·5), slew Namuci (53·7), Karañja and Parṇaya in the cause of Atithigva, demolished the cities of Vaṅgṛda (53·8), overthrew 20 kings and their 60079 followers (53·9), helped Tūrvayāṇa and others (53·10) etc., etc. To mention a few more noted recipients of Indra's favour—Turvaśa, Turvīti, Nodhas, Etaśa, Purukutsa, Vṛṣāgir's five sons Ṛjrāśva, Ambarīṣa, Sahadeva, Bhayamāna and Surādhas, Trasadasyu, Divodasa and Dabhīti etc., etc. Indra fixed the wandering mountains, set the Sun to light up the caves of the Paṇis, pierced thrice seven table-lands heaped together, sought Viṣṇu's help to kill Vṛtra, employed Trita to fashion his weapons, permitted himself to be born as son of the demoness Vikuṇṭhā—these are some of Indra's deeds chosen for their variety and peculiar interest.

Vṛtra, Bala and Śambara are his powerful enemies. A few others may be noted : the demon Kṛṣṇa and his 10000, Viśvarūpa son of Tvaṣṭṛ, Uraṇa of 99 arms, Aśna and Rudhikra, Dhuni and Cumuri, struck Krivi and sent him to eternal slumber, hurled the bolt against the godless Pīyu, overthrew 90 enemy cities with one effort, subjugated the turbulent Bheda etc.

The Aśvins repair men's faults thrice a day, Sūryā elected them for her husbands, they brought wealth to Sudās, made a barren cow give milk, rendered help to Rebha, Vandana, Kaṇva, Bhujyu (saved from shipwreck), Karkandhu Vayya, Śucanti, Atri (saved from fire), Pṛśnigu, Parāvṛj, Vasiṣṭha, Kutsa, Viśpalā,[66] Vaśa, Dīrghaśravas, Kakṣīvat, Māndhātṛ, Bharadvāja, Turvīti, Dabhīti, Dhvasanti, Purusanti, Vadhrimati, Jahnu, Jāhuṣa etc. etc., cured Ghoṣā of leprosy and she could marry, gave protection to Dīrghatamas, removed his blindness and saved him from the persecution of his servants, won the 1000 Ṛk-praise of Dakṣa. etc.

In the interpretation of the legends, Bloomfield set forth some salient principles[67] The first requistite is to deal with the materials which the Vedic texts offer us as a

65. The references are to RV Maṇḍala, sūkta, stanza. Maṇḍala is always shown in Roman figures. The stories are either suggested in the stanzas referred to or are stated by authorities in connection with the stanzas.

66. Bloomfield remarked " Even animals are helped or cured by them. In one instance, they perform a cure calculated to make green with envy even the most skilled of modern veterinary surgeons, if by any chance, they should hear of it. When the racing mare Viśpalā breaks a leg, they put an iron one in its place; with that she handily wins the race ! Rel. Ved. p. 113.

67. JAOS Vol. XV (1891) pp. 143 *et seq.* Contributions to the interpretation of the Veda : third series. Earlier contributions, JAOS Vol. XIII, Am. JPh. Vols. VII and IX.

story, an itihāsa or ākhyāna, which is their face value. There is, frankly speaking, nothing which justifies the interpreter in looking for anthropomorphic or theriomorphic motives at the bottom of it. If these ever existed, they have vanished from record. Why should they, indeed, have existed? Indra, the demiurge of the Vedic texts, encounters demons, for instance, and deals with them according to the fancy of the story-teller. Indra, to be sure, is very largely a storm-God who attacks the clouds and other natural phenomena personified as demons; but, he is also the heroic person INDRA and, in his latter capacity the very one to become embroiled with all sorts of uncanny beings such as inhabited the fancy of the Vedic people. There is much truth in this dictum. Let us take an instance: the Hounds of Yama, Śyāma and Śabala. The mythologists would not permit them to be fancied as hounds at all. Bloomfield himself identifies them as the Sun and the Moon. Others see the west wind and the south wind in them. Similarly, Saramā is the Storm-Goddess, her sons, Sārameyau, gods of wind. Vasiṣṭha is no other than the Sun, being the son of Urvaśī who is no other than the Dawn. In the opinion of another scholar, the Eclipse Code of the Ṛgvedic Aryans is revealed in the Śunaśśepa hymns.[68] The author says, "The fundamental cycle of the Śunaśśepa hymns is one of 2760 days of eight nodal years. The basis of this inference is the number of letters in the seven hymns taken together which is 2768." Further, "According to the legend of Śunaśśepa, Rohita wandered in the wild for seven years, this period amounts to 7 × 354·4 or 2480·4 days. Rohita paid 300 cows to Ajīgarta for complete liberation. In Vedic phraseology a cow means a day (*vide* Gavām-ayana by Dr. Shama Sastry). Therefore 300 cows mean 300 days. Hence the total Rohita period amounts to 2480·4 days... All these several values deduced from independent sets of data agree closely among themselves and support the inference that the basic period of the Ṛgvedic eclipse cycle was 188 Parvas.'

The erudition and imagination behind these views of the specialists cannot and need not be denied. If the hymns originally meant it all is a question which scholars have patiently to reflect upon. The rational view is that RV is a human document, the gods are man-made, they have human characteristics, in other words they are conceived in a human mould.[69] Therefore it is fair that they and their lives have primarily to be looked at from the stand-point of human values. If the hymns contemplated any mythical motive that the Hounds of Heaven are the Sun and the Moon, or that Saramā is the Storm-Goddess or Vasiṣṭha is the Sun, one wonders why the Veda would not state it; what harm? On the other hand, what harm is there to believe that there were two real hounds in the service of Yama; they,

68. M. Raja Rao, The Eclipse Code of the Ṛgvedic Aryans as revealed in Śunaśśepa hymns and Brāhmaṇas. PO. Vol. VI (1942) pp. 1-26. Rohita wandered for 6 years according to AB and for 7 according to Śāṅkh. Śr. S. Printer's devil in multiplication, it should be 2480.8. It is wonderful coincidence. I am reminded of another. The RV Samhitā counts syllables 432,000 which is the extent of Kali-yuga in years, curiously (A Govindācārya-swāmin). In the Brāhmaṇas, many numerical coincidences between several sacrificial aspects and the seasons, years and months etc. are found or forced. In the chapter on Śunaśśepa following, it is pointed out that there is no correspondence at all between the hymns and the Śunaśśepa legend. The hymns are ascribed, by tradition, to his seership and not with reference to the circumstances of the Seer's life.

69. *Cf.* M. Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy, p. 31.

like so many other supernatural or superhuman things, are justified in their existence, as conceived by the Vedic folk. One, perhaps, need not and should not strain so much regarding identities. Vedic Faith has painted a certain picture of heaven. Some of its lines may point to Nature or Allegory or Sky. Still there would remain a large part of it to understand which we have to invoke Faith. Why not assign everything to Faith and be pleased with a state of things, reported as having existed once upon a time (iti-ha-āsa)? No purpose is served by strained identifications. What special achievement of fancy of the Vedic poet it was to view the SUN and MOON, who are the very Light of our existence, as the hounds of Yama, and why exert to reconcile the canine attributes with those world-sustaining qualities of the Heavenly Ones ? It is hard to understand how Bloomfield departed from his own principle, above-mentioned. The case is strong, however, to set human values in the first place.

In the second place, Bloomfield recommends giving up the belief that the allusions to the story which may be gathered from the scattered mantras are the only true material for its reconstruction. He would like to view the entire evidence as one whole—evidence provided by the legends of the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras as well, because they would be based on the same conception as the mantras. *Ad hoc* touches, which are inevitable while handing the story from person to person, inspired by practical matters like sacrifice and witchcraft, have to be dealt with what may be called tact. " The proper attitude is," Bloomfield declares, " on the one hand, neither implicit faith in every detail of the connected legends and in every symbolic employment of the legend in ritualistic practice; on the other hand, a growing faith in the synchronism of mantra, brāhmaṇa and sūtra. As far as the first two are concerned, the writer is more and more inclined to the belief that mantra and brāhmaṇa are for the least part chronological distinctions, that they represent two modes of literary activity and two modes of literary speech, which are largely contemporaneous, the mantras being the earliest lyric and the brāhamṇas, the earliest epic-didactic manifestation of the same cycle of thought. Both forms existed together, for aught we know, from the earliest times, only the redaction of the mantra-collections in their present arrangement seems on the whole to have preceded the redaction of the brāhmaṇas. At any rate, I, for my part, am incapable of believing that even a single Vedic hymn was ever composed without reference to ritual application, and without that environment of legendary report which we find in a no doubt exaggerated and distended form in the Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras." The postulates herein embodied are difficult of acceptance. Firstly mantra and brāhmaṇa are largely contemporaneous and they are for the least part chronological distinctions. The mantras and brāhmaṇas may have co-existed but we have to consider the texts that have been handed down to us. The mantra did not admit the play of a later hand, while the Brāhamṇa did not escape it. The Śunaśśepa legend is an example. The oldest Brāhmaṇa and a text that is nearest the original hymns is the Aitareya. While the RV makes the barest mention of the legend, there is a full and finished narrative thereof in the AB. From the point of view of historical development, the elaboration is remarkable and must

presuppose certain intermediate stages to justify the inclusion of Hariścandra's episode in the beginning and Viśvāmitra's at the end. Macdonell and Winternitz are of opinion that there is a wide gap of time between the mantra age and brāhmaṇa age.[70] That no hymn of the Veda was ever composed without reference to ritual application is only an argument advanced by its author for the occasion; for, it is universally acknowledged that the hymns of the RV are poetry first and then everything else. In them we find "the first outpourings of the human mind, the glow of poetry, the rapture at nature's loveliness and mystery."[71] Bloomfield's reference to tact in handling the evidence supplied by the various texts of different ages is instructive. It stands to reason that in the historical study of the evolution of a legend there ought to be no place for preconceived notions. The material should be assessed just as it is presented, the changes noted from the earlier stage to a later stage and a logical conclusion established. For example, to develop a line of thought that all along the literature of ancient India, the brāhmanic tradition has held sway, the priestly class saw to its supremacy everywhere, in literature as well as in Society[72]:—these are impressions formed in the 19th and 20th centuries about things that transpired in ancient times ; they are, in Bloomfield's own expression, "judgments based upon schematic principles." Verily so. The authors of such interpretations forget to assess the conditions of the times which resulted in this or that happening. One thing stands out for all time and against all dissection and scrutiny of the ancient past. In the fourfold classification of society — whether on the basis of birth or profession—the precedence was, by unanimous approval, established as Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. Each class was expected to discharge its specific duties. The system was welcome and so long as every one adhered to his dharma, there could be no room for unhappiness or unrest. With the convulsions of time, however dharma deteriorated everywhere. Society, under extraneous circumstances, was subject to authoritarian influences of alien cultures, alien customs, alien thought. The whole outlook changed. Looking back from the threshold of a New World, to pass judgment on the ancient past betrays a serious want of " tact."

This section may close with two observations: (1) the Ṛgvedic Legends, if not the whole Samhitā, may be viewed from the stand-point of human values. They inculcate ideas and describe deeds which are nearest to the immediate well-being of mankind. Other connotations are either secondary or accidental. (2) The whole of Ancient Culture, as well as Ṛgvedic, may be viewed in proper perspective, having regard to conditions of the Age under study. A view through the telescope,

70. The subject is fully discussed in a subsequent chapter.

71. Nehru, Discovery of India (Signet Press), Calcutta, 1946, p. 78. An authority selected at random only. Older scholars like Max Müller, Macdonell and others have appreciated the poetical merit of RV hymns.

72. Western scholarship, probably without exception, has succumbed to this sort of impression, in spite of the fact that they profess a dispassionate outlook. They are all praise for so many meritorious features in Ancient Indian Culture, which enjoyed a social solidarity and which had a Dharma to recommend for all time. Why single out one class to account for the ills of the present age for which the whole world, native and alien, is responsible ?

fixed on the threshold of a New World, and across a gulf of Time extending to tens of centuries, becomes perforce defective and dangerous.

IX

LESSONS FROM THE LEGENDS

The Legends of the RV provide a great variety. The fight between the gods and demons and the wars of kings signify a state of immense action in which the entire man power was engaged. In time of peace the whole community sacrificed to the agents of their victory, glory and happiness, whom they called gods. And the gods freely mixed with mortals. They exchanged favours[73] : men sacrificed to please the gods with the soma and the puroḍāśa ; in return, they gave them reward in kind, comfort and progeny. The Ṛgvedic seer appeals for gods' favour in a variety of ways, with such persuasive wit as will move the most unwilling god shower his best favours on him. And the gods were full of solicitude for mankind as is evident from the innumerable instances of succour given by Indra and the Aśvins, recorded in the previous section. The mission of Saramā is an example of how on such occasions uprightness and sagacity will pay. Śunaśśepa illustrates the faith of man and the grace of God. In Vasiṣṭha, one sees the height of excellence that Man could reach and in Viśvāmitra the glory of perfection that Man could achieve by his own endeavour (puruṣa-kāra). Their hatred towards each other, if at all, was transitory ; it is possible to deny it, but nothing únnatural if they have momentarily given in to human passions. All stories that developed in later times must be ascribed to fancy. What more lessons need we look for in the legends, than an exhortation to be strong and brave warriors, to protect the distressed, to be generous and solicitous to one another, to give and to take gifts, to be truthful and be free from jealousy, in short, to respect God and to love Man ?

There are other legends indicated in RV which pertain to the lives of individual personages. They savour of an unethical element which might have pervaded in the society of those days. One hears the story of Vasiṣṭha's birth with a sense of disappointment at the nakedness of a lustful act. The birth of other eminent sages as well, is shrouded in mystery. Prajāpati, desirous of progeny, conducted a 3-year sacrifice in the presence of all gods.[74] There came the goddess of Speech (Vāc) in bodily form. Seeing her, semen effused from both Ka (Prajāpati) and Varuṇa. Vāyu by chance blew it into the Fire ; from the flames was Bhṛgu born and from the cinders, Aṅgiras. But Vāc, on seeing the two sons, said to Prajāpati, " May a third seer also, in addition to these two, be born to me as a son." " So be it," said the Creator. Then the seer Atri was born, equal in splendour to Sun and Fire. Coming to more human affairs, there is the following story of the birth

73. Raghuvaṃśa :
Dudoha gām sa yajñāya sasyāya Maghavā divam /
Sampadvinimayenobhau dadhatur bhuvanadvayam //

74. BD V 97-101 (HOS Vol. 5).

of Dīrghatamas.[75] Once there were two sages called Ucathya and Bṛhaspati. The former had a wife named Mamatā. She was *enceinte.* But Bṛhaspati got fascinated and enjoyed with her. At the time of the effusion of semen, the one already inside the womb cried out, " O Sage, do not discharge. I am here first and may you not cause an admixture of seed." Controlling himself with great difficulty, Bṛhaspati cursed the seed in the womb that, because it caused frustration to his impulse, it should be born blind and be so for long. Thus cursed, Dīrghatamas was born of Mamatā. After birth he praised Agni and he was pleased to remove the blindness. The sage became a celebrated Seer of hymns. Viśvāmitra's birth also is not free from complicity. He was born of Gadhi's wife through the grace of the son-in-law, Ṛcīka, who, on request, prepared the holy *caru* for his mother-in-law as well as for his wife.[76] The Indra-Ahalyā episode is well-known.[77] Several more instances of " ethical aberrations," as Hopkins calls them[78] may be added, but no need. It must undoubtedly be confessed that so long as humanity is subject to the call of the lower passions, which is so in God's dispensation ever since Creation, this ethical aspect remains the same in all ages and at all climes. It is perhaps a challenge that God has thrown out before Man. The merit lies in accepting it and transcending high above the ordinary. The ancient śāstras have recognised these aberrations as examples to be avoided only, and never to be followed. " Though man ought to imitate the seers and gods, yet man may not imitate their misdemeanors, because those divine beings had more lustre than men today and being so glorious they might do what ordinary men may not do."[79] Says an epic sage : " Cease to cite these famous transgressions...do thyself what is suitable and proper."[80] Let us hear Colebrooke : " The aberrations of the human mind are a part of its history. It is neither uninteresting nor useless, to ascertain what it is that ingenious men have done, and contemplative minds have thought, in former times, even where they have erred, especially where their error had been graced by elegance, or redeemed by tasteful fancy. Mythology then, however futile, must, for those reasons, be noticed. It influences the manners, it pervades the literature of nations which have admitted it."[81] It will be fitting to conclude with the views on Mythology, so well and frankly expressed by the first gentleman of India[82] today, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru :

> " Mythology affected me in much the same way. If people believed in the factual contents of these stroies, the whole thing was absurd and

75. Sāyaṇa's prefatory note to RV I 147.3.
76. See *infra* ch. IV, the story is related in Mbh. and Hari.
77. Ahalyā is first mentioned in the Brāhmaṇas (Ahalyāyaijāraḥ). ŚB III 3.4.18, JB ii. 79, ṢaḍB I 1. Evolution of the Myth. See Jhā Com. Vol., pp. 427-33. Article by Dhirendra Varma.
78. Hopkins, Ethics of India, title of ch. VIII.
79. *Ibid.* p. 13, *cf.* Kauṣ. Up. 3.1., ApDhS II 13.8 seq., GDhS I 1.3-4. (Indra is regarded as sinless, nevertheless, RV I 129.5 (anenas)).
80. *Ibid.*, p. 55. *cf.* Mbh. XII 291-17, 822.20.
    Kṛtāni yāni karmāṇi daivatair munibhis tathā /
    Na oaret tāni dharmātmā śrutvā cāpi na kutsayet //
    Alam anyair upālabdhaiḥ kīrtitaiś ca vyatikramaiḥ /
    Peśalam cānurūpam ca kartavyam hitam ātmanaḥ //
81. H. T. Colebrooke, Miscellaneous Essays, Vol. I, p. 4.
82. Mahatma Gandhi is above rank, indeed.

ridiculous. But as soon as one ceased believing in them, they appeared in a new light, a new beauty, a wonderful flowering of a richly endowed imagination, full of human lessons. No one believes now in the stories of Greek gods and goddesses and so, without any difficulty, we can admire them and they become part of our mental heritage. But if we had to believe in them what a burden it would be, and how, oppressed by this weight of belief, we would often miss their beauty. Indian mythology is richer, vaster, very beautiful and full of meaning. I have often wondered what manner of men and women they were who gave shape to these bright dreams and lovely fancies, and out of what gold mine of thought and imagination they dug them out."[83]

83. Discovery of India, p. 77.

CHAPTER I

THE LEGEND OF SARAMĀ

Saramā is generally regarded as the dog of heaven, Deva-śunī. But nowhere in the Ṛgveda is she referred to belong to the canine species.[1] She is only Indra's messenger (Indrasya dūtīḥ–RV 10·108·2). That she is the mother of dogs appears to be a later belief originating in the word Sārameyau (Yama's hounds) which sounds like a matronymic from Saramā, " Saramā's offspring." Yāska refers to her as devaśunī[2] (' the divine bitch '). The later Vedic commentators indeed follow him.[3] The Bṛhaddevatā[4] spins a long story, according to which, Indra deputes Saramā to find out his cattle lifted and hidden by a demon tribe called the Paṇis. Saramā crosses the big river Rasā and succeeds in finding out Indra's cattle, but falls a victim to the temptations of the Paṇis, drinks milk offered by them, returns and on enquiry denies all knowledge of the kine or the Paṇis. Indra gives her a kick, she runs vomiting the milk, Indra follows the track and vanquishes the offenders, the cattle are recovered. The BD account thus casts a reflection on the character of Saramā. But the version in the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa[5] is different,

1. This fact has been noticed by many scholars. Max Müller, ASL 2. p. 467. Keith RPV, p. 192. Macdonell VM p. 151, E. D. Perry, JAOS, 11. p. 141. E. I. Thomas, VH, p. 51.

2. Nir. 11.25.

3. Perhaps by chance, BD alone does not call her śunī anywhere. On the other hand, the same work counts her among the Brahmavādinīs (female seers), BD 2.82-84.

4. BD 7.24-36.

5. JB 2.438-440.

Here is the text as given by Hanns Oertel in JAOS 19 2nd half, pp. 99-100—J.B.2.438-1—atha ha vai paṇayo nāmā'surā devānām go-rakṣā āsuḥ. tābhir athā'patasthuḥ. tā ha rasāyām nirudhya valenā'pi dadhuḥ. 2. Devā atikupya lapuṣ suparṇe'mā no gā anvicche'ti. tathe'ti. Sa hā'nuprapapāta. 3. tā hā'nvājagāma rasāyām antarvalenā'pihitāḥ. tasmai hā'nvāgatāya sarpiḥ kṣīram āmikṣām dadhī'tyetad upanidadhuḥ. tasya ha suhita āsa. tam ho''cus suparṇai'ṣa eva te balir bhaviṣyaty etad annam mā naḥ pravoca iti. 4. sa ha punar āpapāta. tam ho''cus suparṇā'vido gā iti. Kā kīrtiś cit gavām iti ho'vāca. 5. eṣaiva kīrtir gavām iti tasya he'ndro galam pīḷayann uvāca goṣv evā'ham kila tavo'ṣuṣo mukham iti. sa ha dadhidrapsam vā''mikṣām vo'dāsa. so'yam babhūva yo'yam vasantā bhūtikaḥ prajāyate. 6. tam ha tac chaśāpā'slīlajanma te jīvanam bhūyād yo no gā anuvidya tā na prāvoca iti. tasya hai'tad grāmasya jaghanārdhe yat pāpiṣṭham taj jīvanam.

439.1 te saramām abruvan sarama imā nas tvam gā anvicche'ti. tathe'ti sā hā'nuprasasāra. sā ha rasām ājagāma. 2. tām ho'vāca ploṣye tvā gādhā me bhaviṣyasī'ti plavasva me'ti ho'vāca na te gādhā bhaviṣyāmī'ti. 3 sā hā'vācya karṇau ploṣyamāṇā sasāra. sā he' kṣām cakre katham nu mā śunī plaveta hantā'syai gādhā'sānī'ti. tām ho'vaca mā mā ploṣṭhā gādhā te bhaviṣyāmī'ti. tathe'ti. tasyai ha gādhā āsa. sā ha gādhenā'tisasāra. 4 tā hā' nvājagāma rasāyām antarvalenā'pihitāḥ. tasyai hā'nvāgatāyai tathaiva sarpiḥ kṣīram āmikṣām dadhīty etad upanidadhuḥ. 5 sā ho'vāca nā'ham etāvad apriyā devānām. avidam yad vo' śnīyām ta u vai devānām steyam kṛtvā carathai'tāsām vā aham gavām padavīr asmi. na mā lāpayiṣyadhve ne'ndrasya gā upahariṣyadhva iti. 6 sā hā'nāciṣy upasasāha. jarāyv apām tad viveda. tad ha cakhāda. tām hai'ka upajagau tyam iva vai ghnatī Saramā jāru khādatī'ti. tad idam apy etarhi r ivacanam tyam iva vai ghnatī Saramā jāru Khādatī'ti jarāyu ha sā tac cakhāda. 7 sā ha punar āsasāra. tam ho''cus sarame'vido gā iti.

440.1 avidam iti ho'vācemā rasāyām antarvalenā'pihitāḥ. tā yathā'manyadhvam evam ājihīrṣate'ti. 2 tām he'ndra uvācā'*nnādinīm are te sarame prajām karomi yā no gā anvavida iti.* te hai'te vidarbheṣu mācalās sārameyā api ha śārdūlān mārayanti. 3 te devā etam abhiplavam samabharan. tenā'bhyaolavanta. tad abhiplavasyā'bhiplavatvam.

the Śāṭyāyanaka, as suggested by Sāyaṇa,[6] supports the Jaiminīya. According to these two texts, Indra first deputes Suparṇa for the purpose. He proves disloyal. Then Indra sends Saramā who imposes a condition that he should give the cows' milk as food for her offspring. This was promised and she successfully scouted the enemy.

Though there is no express corroboration from other texts for Suparṇa's being involved in a mess in the search for the kine, the important fact that Saramā secured ' food ' for her offspring—shall we say for mankind itself—has been borne out. According to RV 1·72·8, it may be said that this pact of Saramā secured the

Translation—

438.1 Now the Asuras called Paṇis were the cowherds of the gods. They made away with them. At the Rasā they penned them up and hid them in a cave. 2 The gods, exceedingly wroth, said : " O Eagle, search after these our cows." " Yes." He flew after them. 3 He came upon them hidden in a cave at the Rasā. Before him, when he had come, they placed this, *viz.* liquid butter, milk, clotted curds, sour curds. He was well sated with this. They said to him : " O Eagle, this shall be thy tribute, this food, do not betray us." 4 He flew away again. They (the gods) said to him : " O Eagle, hast thou found our cows ? " " What news is there about the cows ? " he said. 5 " This news," said Indra, compressing the eagle's crop. " I for one am the mouth (to declare that) thou hast stayed among the cows." He (the eagle) threw up a drop of sour curds or some clotted curds. That same became the camphor-plant which grows here in spring. 6 Indra thus cursed him (the eagle) : " May thy sustenance be of bad origin, who, having found our cows, has not informed us." Thus his sustenance is the worst that is (found) in the rear of a village.

439.1 They said to Saramā : " O Saramā, do thou search after these our cows." " Yes." She set out for them. She came to the Rasā. 2 She said to her : " I shall swim theee (unless) thou wilt become fordable for me." " Swim me," she (the Rasā) said, " I shall not become fordable for thee." 3 She (Saramā) laying back her ears came forward in order to swim her. She (Rasā) considered : " How indeed should a bitch swim me ? Come, I will be fordable for her." She (Rasā) said to her (Saramā) : " Do not swim me, I will be fordable for thee." " Yes." There was a ford for her. By means of the ford, she crossed over. 4 She came upon them (the cows) hidden within a cave at the Rasā. Before her when she had come, they placed, just as (they had done) before, this, *viz.*, liquid butter, milk, clotted curds, sour curds. 5 She said : " I am not so unfriendly to the gods. I have found what I may obtain of you. You, verily, have stolen from the gods. Truly of these cows I am the guide. You shall not make me prate, you shall not keep Indra's cows." (The text is a bit unintelligible here, however, the translator proceeds—). She...prevailed. The outer membrane of the waters—that she found. That she split open. One cried out against her : " As if she were to kill that one, Saramā splits open the outer-membrane." Even now there is this reproach : " As if she were to kill that one, Saramā splits open the outer-membrane." For she did split open that outer-membrane. 7 She came back again. They (the gods) asked her : " O Saramā, hast thou found the cows ? "

440.1 " I have found them," she said, " hidden within a cave at the Rasā. Be pleased to take them just as you thought." 2 Indra said to her : " Food-eating, wench, I make thy offspring, O Saramā, who hast found our cows." And indeed among the Vidarbhans the mācalas, descendants of Saramā, kill even tigers. 3 These gods prepared this Abhiplava-ceremony. By means of it they sailed over. That is the etymology of the term Abhiplava."

6. Commenting on RV 1.62.3, Sāyaṇa says :

" atredamākhyānam. Saramā nāma devaśunī. Paṇibhir goṣvapahṛtāsu tadgaveṣaṇāya tām Saramām Indraḥ prāhaiṣīt. Yathā loke vyādho vanāntargatamṛgānveṣaṇāya śvānam visṛjati tadvat. Sā ca Saramā evamavocat " He, Indra, asmadīyāya śiśave tadgosambandhi kṣīrādyannam yadi prayacchasi tarhi gamiṣyāmi. Sa tathetyabravīt. Tathā ca Śaṭyāyanakam annādinīm te Sarame prajām karomi yā no gā anvavindaḥ iti. Tato gatvā gavām sthānam ajñāsīt. Jñātvā cāsmai nyavedayat. Tathā niveditāsu goṣu tamasuram hatvā tā gāḥ sa Indro' labhateti. Ayam artho'syām pratipādyate."

Oertel finds fault with Sāyaṇa for not giving the full story while introudcing RV 10.108, where, it is clear that Sāyaṇa only expands the sentence quoted from the Sarvānukramaṇī. It may, however, be noted in passing that among about half a dozen contexts where Saramā and her adventure are stated in the RV, Sāyaṇa, almost without design, has given short or long

milk-food to the whole of mankind (mānuṣī viṭ bhojate), RV 4·16·8- and Sāyaṇa thereon adds support for this view.[7]

Now it will be of interest to study the legend in detail.

I

ṚGVEDA SAMHITĀ

Following are the passages in the Ṛgveda which mention Saramā; an attempt will be made to construct a story of her exploits without departing from the original text.

1. Índrasyá'ṅgirasāṁ ceṣṭaú
   vidát Sarámā tánayāya dhāsím /
   Bṛ́haspátir bhinád ádrim vidád gáḥ
   sámusríyābhir vāvaśanta náraḥ // (RV 1·62·3)

Translation—

" By command of Indra and the Aṅgirasas, Saramā found sustenance for posterity. The Lord of the Gods (Bṛhaspati) split the rock[8] and found the cattle; the heroes shouted merrily in company with the cows."

Sāyaṇa introduces the verse as follows—

Concerning this there is the following story (ākhyāna). There was the heavenly dog called Saramā. When the cows had been driven off by the Paṇis, Indra sent Saramā in search of these cows, even as in this world a hunter would send forth his dog in search of game. Saramā said, " O Indra, I will go on one condition, that you will give to our offspring the food belonging to these cows, *viz.* milk etc." He said : " Yes." And so the Śāṭyāyanaka says : " Food-eating I make thine offspring, O Saramā, who hast found our cows." Then going she learnt about the abode of the cows. And having learnt it, she told him. And having been informed about the cows, Indra, slaying the demon, regained these cows.[9]

2. Svādhyo divá á saptá yahvíḥ
   rāyó dúro vyṛtajñá ajānan /
   vidád gávyam Sarámā dṛḷhám ūrvám
   yénā nú kam mánuṣī[10] bhójate víṭ // (RV 1·72·8)

introductions with slight inconsistencies. He could not have missed the difference in the outline of the legend really. One wonders if this adds support to the theory that Sāyaṇa alone did not write the Bhāṣya but caused many scholars to do so by parts, under his general editorship. *Cf.* Gune, Sāyaṇa's Commentary—its Composition. AŚ. Mookerjee 3.3.

Also my paper on the Ṛgvedic word Parvata, contributed to Prof. M. Hiriyanna Commermoration Volume (Pub. Kāvyālaya, Mysore), wherein I have argued in favour of the same conclusion.

7. sá no netā vājam ādarṣi bhūrim. Sāyaṇa—no'smān bhūrim prabhūtam vājam annam netā prāpayitā sa tvam ā darṣi. ādaram kṛtavān asi.

8. adrim attāram asuram (Sāyaṇa) meaning the demon Paṇi or Vala as he is sometimes thought.

9. The text is quoted above, footnote 6.

Translation—

Seven rivers, mighty and beneficent, from heaven (flow on earth), and (thereby) the knowers of Truth perceived the doors of wealth. Saramā found the kine and also plenty of food, by which, indeed, mankind enjoys (sustenance for ever).

It must be noted that this *mantra* is addressed to Agni. Though he is not directly connected with the recovery of the heavenly cows, the poet means to express that whatever good there has been, all that has happened by Agni's favour. The seven mighty rivers flow from heaven. They are flooded with water, which is showered on Earth by the Sun-god. And how is the Sun-god pleased? Through Agni, of course, who carries him the oblations with which the god is pleased. Even so, the release of the cattle. Having been pleased with the sacrifice, which is possible only through his favour, Indra sent Saramā in search of the cows, and in return she secured abundant food wherewith mankind is able to sustain.

Secondly, the stanza records two different ideas *viz.* the Vedic people as they progressed in their march finding seven huge rivers, and Saramā discovering the stolen cows. The one opened the very door of prosperity, by providing for agriculture etc., the other provided eternal food, namely cows' milk.

3. Vidád yádī Sarámā rugṇám ádreḥ
 máhi pā́thaḥ pūrvyám sadhryak kaḥ /
 Ágram nayat supády ákṣarāṇām
 ácchā rávam prathamā́ jānatí gāt // (RV 3·31·6)

Translation—

When Saramā discovered the fated (entrance) to the mountain, then Indra made great and ample provision (for her young), as previously promised. Then the sure-footed one, already familiar with their lowing, led (them : Indra and Aṅgirasas) to the presence[11] of the imperishable kine.

This verse clearly implies the various stages of the story: cattle stolen and hidden in the mountainous stronghold, Saramā ordered to search and Indra's promise of food for her progeny, her success and the promise realised, Indra's final raid and recovery of cattle.

4. Apó yád ádrim puruhūta dárdaḥ
 Āvír bhuvat Sarámā pūrvyám te /
 sá no netā́ vā́jam ā́ darṣi bhū́rim
 gotrā́ rujánn áṅgirobhir gṛṇānáḥ // (RV 4.16.8)

Translation—

When you rent the clouds apart, for the sake of water, O Indra, there appeared Saramā before you (bringing news of the cattle). Then, as the

10. Sāyaṇa—Yena nu yena tu gavyena mānuṣī viṭ manos sambandhinī prajā bhojate. Idānīm bhuṅkte. (Tad gavyam api paramparayā'gnir eva karoti).

11. Construe agram as accusative denoting place. Prof. H. D. Velankar.

Aṅgirasas extolled you, you, our leader, pierced through the mountains and, by providing us plenty of food, evinced great interest in us.

Note.—apo yad adrim puruhūta dardaḥ—this must refer to a different incident, namely, the usual concern of Indra to send showers of rain to the Earth. Soon after this was performed, Saramā appeared with glad tidings of the discovery of the stolen cattle. So another adventure was ready for Indra, who, being greatly interested in the well-being of his followers, readily took up the task. The Aṅgirasas praised him all the while. Encouraged by their flattery, he vanquished the Paṇis, recovered the cattle and provided plenty of food for mankind, as promised to Saramā earlier.

5. Ánūnod átra hástayato ádriḥ
árcan yéna dáśa māsó návagvāḥ /
ṛtám yatí Sarámā gā́ avindat
víśvāni satyā́ 'ṅgirāś cakāra // (RV 5.45.7)

Translation—

At this sacrifice the stone (set in motion) by the hands of the priests began to make noise, whereby the nava-gvas celebrated the ten-month worship, when Saramā, traversing the path of truth, discovered the cattle, and Aṅgiras rendered all (the rite) effective.

Note.—Sāyaṇa, for the first time, introduces an alternative explanation of Saramā. She is the heavenly dog or Speech herself, uttering praise, and ṛtam is sacrifice or truth. (Ṛtam satyam yajñam vā yatī prāpnuvatī Saramā saraṇaśīlā stutirūpā vāk, aṅgirasām gavārtham indreṇa prahitā devaśunī vā gā avindat paṇibhir apahṛtāḥ). Ṛtam means[12] among other things the heavenly path, the established path as well.

The hymn is addressed to the Viśve-devas, the palm, having been given to the Aṅgirasas (who are seven in number), in the liberation of the heavenly cows.

6. Víśve asyā́ vyúṣi máhināyāḥ
sám yád góbhir áṅgiraso návanta /
útsa āsām paramé sadhásthe
ṛtásya pathā́ sarámā vidad gā́ḥ // (RV 5.45.8).

Translation—

When all the Aṅgirasas, on the advent of this adorable Dawn, came in contact with the (discovered) cattle, then milk and the rest were offered in the august assembly, for Saramā had found the cows by the path of truth.

12. Grassmann in his Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda has given as many as 23 meanings in which the word Ṛta has been used in RV. Articles and monographs have appeared in plenty on this subject in recent times. A comprehensive study of Ṛta has been made by Dr. H. Lefever in his "Vedic Idea of Sin" (Ph.D. thesis, Tübingen) London Mission Press, Nagarcoil, Travancore (1935).

Note.—Here, again, Sāyaṇa takes Saramā as Speech or the heavenly dog, and ṛta as truth or water. (Ṛtasya satyasya pathā mārgeṇa Saramā vāk devaśunī vā gā nigūḍhā vidat alabhata. Yadvā āsām gavām parame sadhasthe sahasthāne vrajasya nigūhanapradeśe utsa udakasya prasravaṇo vartate, bilam ityarthaḥ. Tena ṛtasyodakasya pathā mārgeṇa Saramā gā vidat).

Again, the Viśve-devas are the devatā here. There was general jubilation when the cattle were recovered, Aṅgirasas led the celebration, all drank milk etc. and made merry.

The ṛṣi is Sadāpṛṇa of the Atri family, in this as well as in the previous quotation.

7.

RV 10.108

1. Kím icchántī Sarámā prédám ānaṭ
dūré hy ádhvā jáguriḥ parācaíḥ /
kā́sméhitiḥ kā́ páritakmyāsīt
katháṁ Rasā́yā ataraḥ páyāṁsi //

2. Índrasya dūtī́r iṣitā́ carāmi
mahá icchántī Paṇayo nidhī́nvaḥ /
atiskádo bhiyásā tán na āvat
táthā Rasā́yā ataram páyāṁsi //

3. Kīdṛ́ṅṅ Índras Sarame kā́ dṛśīkā́
yásyedám dūtī́r ásaraḥ parākā́t /
ā́ ca gácchān mitrám enā dadhāma
áthā gávām gópatir no bhavāti //

4. Nā́hám tám veda dábhyam dábhat sáḥ
yásyedám dūtī́r ásaram parākā́t /
ná tám gūhanti sraváto gabhīrā́ḥ
hatā́ Índreṇa Paṇayaḥ śayadhve //

5. Imā́ gā́vaḥ Sarame yā́ aícchaḥ
pári divó ántān subhage pátantī /
kás ta énā áva sṛjād áyudhvī
utā́smā́kam ā́yudhā santi tigmā́ //

6. Asenyā́ vaḥ Paṇayo vácāṁsi
aniṣavyā́s tanvaḥ santu pāpī́ḥ /
ádhṛṣṭo va étavā́ astu pánthāḥ
Bṛ́haspátir va ubhayā́ ná mṛḷāt //

7. Ayám nidhíḥ Sarame ádribudhnaḥ
góbhir áśvebhir vásubhir nyṛ̀ṣṭaḥ /
rákṣanti tám Paṇáyo yé sugopā́ḥ
réku padám álakam ā́ jagantha //

8. Éhá gamann ṛ́ṣayaḥ sómaśitāḥ
ayā́syo áṅgiraso návagvāḥ /
tá etám ūrvám ví bhajanta gónām
áthaitád vácaḥ Paṇáyo vámannít //

9. Evā́ ca tvám Sarama ājagántha
prábādhitā sáhasā daívyena /
svásāram tvā kṛṇavai mā́ púnar gāḥ
ápa te gávām subhage bhajāma //

10. Nā́hám veda bhrātṛtvám nó svasṛtvám
Índro vidur áṅgirasaś ca ghorā́ḥ /
gókāmā me acchadayan yádā́yam
ápā́ta ita Paṇayo várīyaḥ //

11. Dūrám ita Paṇayo várīyaḥ
úd gā́vo yantu minatír ṛténa /
Bṛ́haspátir yā́ ávindan nígūḷhāḥ
Sómo grā́vāṇa ṛ́ṣayaś ca víprāḥ //

Translation—

1. With what intention has Saramā come to this place? Verily the way is long and 'losing itself in the distance.' What is the motive of thy coming to us? What sort of wandering was thine? And how didst thou cross the waters of the Rasā?

2. I come as the appointed messenger of Indra, desiring O Paṇis, your great hidden treasures; through fear of being crossed, the (water) helped us: thus I passed over the waters of the Rasā.

3. What is Indra like, O Saramā? How is the look of him as whose messenger you have come to this place from afar? Oh, let him come by all means, we will make friends with him, let him look after our cattle!

4. I cannot think he is a person to be subdued, he is one to subdue (others)—he, as whose messenger, I have come here from afar. The deep streams conceal him not. Slain by Indra, O Paṇis, you will lie prostrate.

5. These are the cows, O auspicious Saramā, which thou desirest, having traversed round and round the ends of heaven. Who will give them up to thee, without fight? And our weapons are sharp, indeed.

6. Your words, O Paṇis, are no substitute for armies, your sinful bodies may not be pierced by arrows, your track may yet be unassailable for an invasion, but, mind you, the Lord of the Gods (Bṛhaspati) will spare neither.

7. This treasure, O Saramā, with its cows, horses and riches, is quite secure in the mountain stronghold. Good sentinels are the Paṇis who guard it. Alas, in vain didst thou come to this far-off land!

8. Roused by the Soma, the Ṛṣis, Ayāsya, Aṅgirasas and the Navagvas will march against you here and this treasure of kine they will snatch and share; then, O Paṇis, you will eat these words of yours.

9. After all, O Saramā, thou hast come hither constrained by divine pressure. Return not, we shall make thee our sister and we shall set apart a share of cattle for thee, O good one.

10. Brotherhood or sisterhood, I know not; Indra knows and the fierce Aṅgirasas. Desirous of cattle they will besiege you as I get back to them; hence, O Paṇis, run away to a distant spot.

11. Make haste, O Paṇis, to a far-off place, let the kine step forth in due order—the kine which had been hidden and which Bṛhaspati (Indra), Soma, the Ṛṣis and the grinding stones have well earned.

From the above abstracts it can be seen that the recovery of the stolen cows was a great event in the annals of the Vedic peoples. Being referred to by name in no less than five maṇḍalas and by five seers of different families, Saramā has shown herself to be an important character. The Aṅgirasas, a company of seven brothers, have staged the whole drama. Indra is of course the hero. Bṛhaspati is once mentioned, but he is Indra only, being the chief of Gods (bṛhatām patiḥ). But it is indeed the concern of all the gods : hence the hymns to Agni the priest of the Sacrifice and to the Viśve-Devas. This suggests that for the common weal, the gods would put forth a united effort. Victory was theirs, as it ever came to be.

The author (or the seer) of the hymn of the tenth maṇḍala is anonymous, in the ordinary sense. Technically, the Paṇis and Saramā are seers (ṛṣi) of their own speeches and deities (devatā) of the speeches of the other party.[14] (Paṇyuktau Saramā devī, taduktau Paṇayas tathā).[15] The dialogue (Samvāda) is excellently conceived, and composed in a masterful manner. The Paṇis are described as niggards, misers, traders or demons, henchmen of the Dasyu chief etc., etc. by the civilization-experts. This hymn belies such contemptible references. They are enemies of course, but they have behaved nobly, diplomatically and with the utmost courtesy for the messenger. Their utterances are marked by firmness and resolve; they won't surrender the treasure without a fight and their arms are strong enough. They have had the sense of humour to indulge in a light-hearted joke at their adversary, Indra. Especially that a female messenger led the mission, the questions—'How is Indra, how does he look like etc.'—provide amusement; they render the atmosphere more lively and perhaps easily convert the ambassador to thier own thinking. Lastly they tried to lure her with a share and argue speciously in support 'We know you have after all come on this mission by pressure of the gods, why bother to return and it is such long distance, stay with us as sister and enjoy a share of the cattle.' Thus three of the well-known expedients—sāma, dāna and bheda—were called in to play. The Paṇis behaved indeed magnanimously, for, were they demons and barbarians, what harm if they had resorted to the final expedient, daṇḍa, also ? For the occasion at least, the enemy could have been put

off the scent. But the Paṇis seemed to know and practice the laws of fair fight. Equally remarkable is the part played by Saramā. She displayed, from beginning to end, a sense of having realised her responsibility fully as an ambassador. Carrying a message was not the only task, she had to act also in consonance with and for the realisation of the message. The Paṇis, were taken by surprise when she, straight to their face, charged them with theft. The thieves could not evade or bluff. Her account that the waters of the Rasā chose to make it easy for her to ford across, lest she should swim, was sufficient to elevate her in their estimation. She spoke like a true champion when she said that her master is not a person to be cowed down, but he would cow down others. And no stream, however deep, can drown him. The idea that their abode was impregnable was disproved by Saramā herself bearding them in their own den. And how powerfully she rejects the offer of lucre ! Finally her advice to them to depart surrendering the cows is not without tenderness. After all what is the gain in bloodshed and massacre ! Thus we have the specimen of a political mission very ably discharged. And, again, whoever the author, he has succeeded in giving it a literary garb full of artistic merit.

Now to see such an excellent episode run its course in the stream of later literature.

ABSTRACT OF ṚGVEDA REFERENCES

The Reference	Maṇḍala	Ṛṣi	Devatā	Chandas	Remarks
(1) I.62.3	Śatarcina	Nodhā-Gautamaḥ	Indra	Triṣṭubh	Indra and Aṅgiras deputed Saramā; as a reward. she got food for the progeny. Bṛhaspati (Indra : bṛhatām patiḥ) rent apart the mountain and obtained the cattle. All shouted with joy.
(2) I.72.8		Parāśaraḥ Śāktyaḥ	Agni	Triṣṭubh	They found the Seven Rivers flowing and thereby discovered

						the door of prosperity. Saramā found the stolen cows and mankind got its life's food. Different events evidently. But all by favour of Agni.
(3)	III.31.6	Viśvāmitra	Kuśika, Aiṣīrathi[13] or Viśvāmitra	Indra	Triṣṭubh	Saramā found out the culprits, Indra gave the promised food and much more; then she led, being first to recognise the cattle. These outlines are clearly implied.

13. Investigating the alternative in naming the Ṛṣi of the hymn 3.31, some useful information was made out as follows :—

Sarvānukramaṇī says : Śāsat Kuśiko Viśvāmitra eva vā śruteḥ. And the Ārṣānukramaṇī on the same : Kuśikam śāsad ityāhur Viśvāmitram yathāśruti/

This seems to suggest that tradition ascribes this hymn to Kuśika, son of Iṣīratha and grandfather of Viśvāmitra. But actual mention in the Śruti is in favour of Viśvāmitra himself, the Śruti being AB 6.18.2, wherein the Sampāta hymns seen by Viśvāmitra have been enumerated, 'Śāsat' being one of them. Commenting on the passage, Ṣaḍguruśiṣya remarks.

Abhi taṣṭeva dīdhayā manīṣām ityādi brāhmanaśrutidarśanād adhikṛta eva vā gāthiputro Viśvāmitro vā / Sarvatra śrutimūlatvépyatra śrutir iti pratyakṣaśrutir iti vaktum / Eveti paunarvacayī (?) yako vā viśiṣṭatvādasyottaratra nirvṛttir mā bhūd iti / Māṇḍaliko hyayam / (Macdonell : Sarvā. p. 106).

Tradition which was perhaps much older than the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa assigned the revelation of the hymn to Kuśika an ancestor of Viśvāmitra. But the direct evidence as against heresay could not be discounted, the direct Śruti evidence being provided by the AB. And, moreoever, he is a māṇḍalika (Seer of the whole maṇḍala). Thus the Anukramaṇis regard the AB also as Śruti, a term which must have come into vogue in its comprehensive sense already by the 4th century B.C. which is said to be the date of the Sarvānukramaṇī.

But compare the same hymn repeated in the Vājasaneyi Samhitā (33.59) and attributed to Kuśika only. Will this throw light on the relative age of VS and AB ?

The Reference	Maṇḍala	Ṛṣi	Devatā	Chandas	Remarks
(4) IV.16.8	Vāmadeva	Vāmadeva	Indra	Triṣṭubh	This again refers to several incidents. Indra shattered the clouds for water. Saramā brought news of cattle. Aṅgiras encouraged Indra by praise. Indra gave them plenty and pierced the rocks (for the cows).
(5) V.45.7	Atri	Sadāpṛṇa Ātreya	Viśve-Devāḥ	Triṣṭubh	Having sent Saramā on the search probably, Aṅgiras performed a sacrifice wishing success for her. And lo, she came with good news. Hence Aṅgiras' part was creditable.
(6) V.45.8	Atri	Sadāpṛṇa Ātreya	Viśve-Devāḥ	Triṣṭubh	On a fine morning they celebrated the victory. The Aṅgirasas called an assembly to felicitate Saramā who found

					the cows. All drank with joy.
(7) X.108.1-11	Kṣudra-sūktas and Mahā-sūktas	Paṇis and Saramā	Saramā and the Paṇis	Triṣṭubh	How Saramā executed her mission is brought out in this dramatic dialogue. With grit and endurance she travelled so far, crossed a deep river and discovered the cows. Then charged the robbers with theft. They cut jokes at her and tried to win her over by offering a share of booty. But with uprightness and sagacity, she did not succumb. On the other hand, she threatened them effectively and warned them to run away to a distant land after surrendering the cows.

II

SAṀHITĀS OTHER THAN THE ṚGVEDA

1. The Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā repeats RV III.31.6 Vidadyadī Saramā etc. (VS 33.59), the repetition does not bear any relevancy to the context.[16]

2. The Kāṭhaka[17] repeats the same mantra *i.e.* RV 3.31.6 with a background which is of doubtful cogency. Gods and demons vied with each other in sacrifice. Whatever gods did demons also did and became more prosperous. The gods became inferior and much degraded. Then they saw the 'Āgrāyaṇa' rite and overtook their rivals. In this rite they first employed the mantra Vidadyadī Saramā (RV 3.31.6) as 'puro-ruc.' In the redemption of the heavenly cows, Saramā went forth first and the task was accomplished, perhaps this 'going ahead' was sufficient to justify the employment of the Ṛgvedic verse in the 'Go-ahead' rite (āgrāyaṇa). And to boot there is the word agram in the mantra !

3. The Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā also repeats[18] the same mantra *i.e.* RV 3.31.6 (Vidadyadī Saramā etc.). Here also the setting is the "Āgrāyaṇa," the mantra is again employed as 'puro-ruc.' Having performed the Āgrāyaṇa, the gods went up to heaven and ousted the demons. The explanation of 'puro-ruc' is rather interesting. Says the text after quoting RV 3.31.6. Iti puro rucam kuryāt, rujati haiva, atho vāg vai Saramā, vācam evaiṣām vṛṅkte.

4. The Atharva-veda Saṁhitā has two verses referring to Saramā (AV 9.4.16 and 20.77.8). Of these the latter reference is a repetition of RV 4.16.8. The former is as follows :

Té kúṣṭhikāḥ Sarámāyai
kūrmébhyo adadhuḥ śaphán /
úbadhyamasya kīṭébhyaḥ
śva (śa) vartébhyo adhārayan //

Translation—

'Those dew-claws (were) Saramā's, they assigned the hoofs to the tortoises, the content of his bowels they maintained for the worms, the Śavartas'.—Whitney (HOS).

This hymn of the AV is to accompany the gift of a bull and is counted among the pauṣṭika mantras. It does not contribute anything for our understanding of the Saramā problem. She must however have been looked upon as the deity of the dogs.

16. Mahīdhara comments upon this, giving both interpretations *i.e.* Saramā as heavenly dog and Saramā as Speech.

17. Devāś ca vā asurāś ca samāvadeva yajña'kurvata yadeva devā akurvata tad asurā akurvata te'surā bhūyāṁsaś śreyāṁsa āsan kanīyāmsaḥ pāpīyāmsa ānujāvaratarā iva devās te devā etam āgrāyaṇam apaśyams tam agṛhṇata tenāgram paryāyan yad agram paryāyams tad āgrāyaṇasyāgrāyaṇatvam ya ānujāvaras syāt // Vidad yadī...gāt // ityetayā purorucāgrāyaṇam gṛhītam bhrātṛvyam eva vṛktvāgram paryeti // (KS Sthānaka 27. anuvāka 9).

18. With one difference ; vidadyadi for vidadyadī (MS 4.6.4).

The RV verse 4.16.8 is AV 20.77.8. In fact the first eight verses of the RV hymn are repeated as AV 20.77, though the former has 21 stanzas in all. Indra is the deity praised throughout, the viniyoga being in connection with the pṛṣṭhya and other sacrifices. The reference to Saramā, therefore, has the same value as its original counterpart.[19]

It may be said that the other Saṁhitā texts contain no reference to Saramā. That she was an entity to reckon with in the Vedic fold seems more than established, though already speculation was afoot whether she was Indra's dog or whether she represented that most covetable attribute of a human being, *viz.* Speech.

III

BRĀHMAṆAS

(A) 1. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa : (2.5.8.10.)[20] —

Vidád[21] yátī Sarámā rugṇám ádraḥ / Máhi pā́thaḥ
pūrvyám sadhríyakkaḥ / Ágram nayat supádyákṣarāṇām /
Áccha rávam prathamā́ jānatī́ gāt /[22]

Vidád[23] gávyam Sarámā dṛḍhám ūrvám / Yénā
núkam mā́nuṣī bhójate víṭ / ā́ yé víśvā svapatyā́ni
cakrúḥ / kṛṇvā́nāso amṛtatvā́ya gātúm /[24]

Saramā, goddess in the guise of a dog, being deputed by Indra, once, to find food on earth, was proceeding to the mortal world from the Meru mountain. There she saw the people starving for want of food. Then she created plenty of water, which is the preliminary aid for food and which flowed through all fields. Sure footed, she led forth water and then in front she knowing the lowing sound of the imperishable ones (cows) proceeded towards them.

19. In the words of Whitney (Atharvaveda HOS 7.cxli) Book 20 is a pure mass of excerpts from the RV, it stands in no conceivable relation to the rest of the AV, and when and why it was added thereto is a matter for conjecture.

20. A word-index to all the extant Brāhmaṇas has been provided by the Vaidika-padānukrama-kośa (in two vols.) VVRI, Lahore. See for the present reference Vol. II Brāhmaṇas, part II, p. 1047. [VVRI in now in HOSIARPUR East Punjab].

21. Mādhavīya-bhāṣya—Saramā kācit śunī śvamūrtidhāriṇī devatā bhūmāvannasampādanārtham āyatī Indreṇa preṣitā adrer yatī meroḥ sakāśād bhūmim gacchantī rugṇam annābhāvena kṣudhā grastam janam vidad alabhata /Tato mahi pāthaḥ mahajjalam kaḥ akarot/ Kīdṛśam ? Pūrvyam pūrvam utpannam annasya kāraṇam sahāñcatīti sadhriyak sarvakṣetrasañcārītyarthaḥ suṣṭhu padyate gacchatīti supadī sā śunī agram nayat tajjalam purato nītavatī / Tatra purodeśa akṣarāṇām kṣaro vināśo hiṁsā tadayogyānām gavām ravam śabdam jānatī acchā tadābhimukhyena prathamā mukhyā satī gāt jagāma jalotpādanenānnam sampādya gorasam sampādayitum gatavatītyarthaḥ //

22. Reads differently from RV. RV 3.31.6 dī for tī, dhryak for dhriyak.

23. Saramā śunī gavyam goyūtham vidad alabhata / kīdṛśam ? dṛḍham kadācidapyanapāyinam ūrvam atiprabhūtam / mānuṣī viṭ viśvamanuṣyarūpā prajā yena goyūthena bhojate kṣīrādikam bhuṅkte / Nukam ityetadavyayam sarvathetyasminnarthe vartate/Amṛtatvāya svargarūpāya karmaphalāya gātum mārgam kṛṇvānāsaḥ kurvāṇā ye yajamānā viśvā sarvāṇi svapatyāni karmāṇyā cakruḥ sarvataḥ kṛtavantaḥ / Tathāvidhayajamānarūpā prajā yena gavyena bhuṅkte tam goyūtham alabhateti pūrvatrānvayaḥ //

24. Reads differently from RV 1.72.8c dṛḷham, 1.72.8d ,1.72.9a tasthuḥ, 1.72.9b,

Saramā found the herd of kine which was strong and huge, by the help of which the whole mankind is provided with milk etc. And all (the sacrificers) performed their duty and prepared the way for attaining heaven.

These Brāhmaṇa portions are concerned with mantras for what are described as upahomas.[25] The commentary is by Sāyaṇa as stated. But the interpretation is so different from that given in the RV for the same passage. This strengthens the view that commentaries attributed to the great name of Sāyaṇa do not appear to be by a single hand. Under his able sponsorship a number of scholars must have independently *i.e.* without co-ordination worked out different sections at one time.

No further light is thrown on the original Saramā story except the fact that the tradition that Saramā by her timely service to Indra was able to secure food for mankind has been corroborated. That she found the (stolen) cows is also established. The relevancy of the contents of these mantras to the occasion prescribed is altogether a different problem.

2. The Āpastamba Śrauta Sūtra (12.15.6) simply repeats the reading of the TB, only the first half corresponding to RV 3.31.6 and has nothing to add.

3. The version of the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa and the Śāṭyāyanaka, which is available only in quotations[26] in other works, has been recorded above. (Supra fn. 5). There are a few minor variations from the accepted version of the story *e.g.* the Paṇis are introduced as the cowherds of the gods; they made away with the cattle in their charge.

4. Taittirīya Āraṇyaka[27]—

Sahasravṛd iyam bhūmiḥ / param vyoma sahasravṛt / Aśvinā Bhujyū Nāsatyā / viśvasya jagataspatī / jāyā bhūmiḥ patir vyoma / mithunam tā aturyathāḥ / putro bṛhaspatī rudraḥ / Saramā iti strī pumam / śukram vāmantad rajatam vāmanyat / viṣurūpe ahanī dyauriva sthaḥ //

Commentary—Saramā vediḥ, saraḥ saraṇam anuṣṭhānapravṛttiḥ sā ca mīyate paricchidyate atreti Saramā sā ca tayor duhitā / ' Iti ' evam strīpumam ekā strī dvau pumāmsau iti apatyatrayam sampannam.

Here we have a third equation of Saramā.[28] She is the sacred altar (vedi) and, if her holy origin were to be stated, she is the daughter of Heaven and Earth (Dyāvāpṛthivī). Bṛhaspati and Rudra—a peculiar combination—are also their sons and hence Saramā is their sister. It is a well-known hypothesis that the

25. Caturtha upahomārthā mantrā bahava īritāḥ /
Prapāṭhake pañcameśmims tacchesa upavarṇyate // p. 225, Mysore Edition.

26. Dr. T. R. Cintāmaṇi reports discovery of a Śāṭyāyanaka Ms. which is only fragmentary. (JORM 5.pp.296-298. 1931). He, however, has not stated whether the name Śāṭyāyana has anywhere been indicated in the Ms.

27. Rajendra Lal Mitra's Edition, with Sāyaṇa's Commentary, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta, 1871, Baptist Mission Press (pp. 73-74). I prapāṭhaka, 10th anuvāka.

28. 1st, the heavenly dog (RV), 2nd the human speech (YV).

Taittirīya marks a stage when Vedic life was dominated by the sacrificial cult and we should note as such the several allegorical or mythical equations of the live personalities of the Ṛgveda. One thing can be marked that the canine nature of Saramā has come to recede from the thought of the people.

(B) Later Vedic references—

Saramā does not seem to have contributed to Upaniṣadic thought. Her mundane appeal however has kept up in rather an amusing way, as reflected in the Pāraskara Gṛhya sūtra.[29] After the medhājanana ceremony certain spells are pronounced to guard the confinement chamber:

> Yadi kumāra upadravej jālena pracchādyottarīyeṇa vā pitāṅka ādhāya japati—kūrkuraḥ sukūrkuraḥ kūrkuro bālabandhanaḥ / Cecceechunaka sṛja namaste astu Sīsaro lapetāpahvara / Tat satyam yat te devā varam adaduḥ sa tvam kumāram eva vāvṛṇīthāḥ / Ceccecchunaka sṛja namaste astu Sīsaro lapetāpahvara / Tat satyam yat te Saramā mātā Sīsaraḥ pitā Śyāmaśabalau bhrātarau / Ceccecchunaka sṛja namaste astu Sīsaro lapetāpahvareti.

If, after birth, the child takes ill, the father takes the child on his lap, wraps it up warmly and recites the Dog-spell if it may be so termed. It is an invocation to the dog not to bother the child. For when the gods offered him a boon, it seems he chose the children for himself, that is, he will possess them, causing illness and perhaps death. The idea corresponds to what is generally described as bālagraha (bālabandhana), which is referred to in the Mahābhārata.

Thus in the spell the father pleads with the creature to leave the child: 'Verily your mother is (the celebrated) Saramā, your father Sīsara and, Śyāma and Śabala (the famous hounds of Yama) are your brôthers. Therefore, doggie, let go, salutation to thee, Sīsara may speak, depart'. This is a sentiment and an appeal to the unknown spirit to get away from the child etc.—an appeal which we unconsciously say while appeasing the crying child.

A similar reference is found in the Ekāgni-kāṇḍa (2.16) which is also in the form of a spell to drive away the Dog-Spirit (śva-graha) *i.e.* to ward off whooping cough etc. which generally attack the children. Here the pedigree is differently given, fresh names are introduced, Alaba, Ṛji, Adhorāma, Ulumbala, Subīrṇa, etc. Śyāma and Śabala are there of course, Saramā the mother but Lohita the father. But there is an interesting allusion to Saramā's spying the cattle while the boon is granted to the dog to pester children. 'True it is, Indra told thee to spy and bring the cows. Thou spied them and came back. He asked thee: 'Hast thou spied?" Thou saidst: 'Spied." (Indra then said) "Ask for a boon." (Thou saidst, "I select kumāra" etc.[30]

29. PGS I,16.24. *cf.* Mbh. Āraṇyaka-parva (manuyṣyagrahas), *cf.* Keith, RPV p.241. Also Hopkins. CHI, p.231. Hopkins thinks that the dog in the RV is the companion and ally of man, the protector and probably the inmate of his house. He also takes a strong exception to Brunnhofer's theory that in the eyes of the Vedic Aryans, the dog was a despicable beast. Amj Ph. V pp.154-55.

30. Nārāyaṇa Aiyangār: Essays on Indo-Aryan Mythology, Part I, p.180 f. (1898). This author identifies Saramā with the star Rohiṇī or Aldebaran.

IV

NIRUKTA

Yāska explains (Nir. 11.24-25).[31]

Saramā Saraṇāt / Tasyā eṣā bhavati / 24.

Kim icchantī Saramā etc. RV 10.108.1. is quoted :

Kim icchantī Saramedam prānaṭ / dūre hyadhvā / jagurir jaṅgamyateḥ / parāñcanair acitaḥ / kā te'smāsv arthahitir āsīt / kim paritakanam / paritakmyā rātriḥ, parita enām takma / takmetyuṣṇanāma, takata iti sataḥ / Katham Rasāyā ataraḥ payāmsīti / Rasā nadī, rasateḥ śabdakarmaṇaḥ / katham rasāni tānyudakānīti vā /

Devaśunīndreṇa prahitā Paṇibhir asuraiḥ samūda ityākhyānam //

The heavenly dog, Saramā, being deputed on an errand by Indra, had this conversation with the demons called Paṇis. Saramā got the name by her quick movement (saraṇāt). Thus Yāska is prepared to credit the story of Saramā as if the event did take place: the demons stole the divine cows, Indra ordered Saramā to search, she found them with the Paṇis and had conversation with them, Indra recovered the cattle. The sacrificial equation of Saramā with Vāk or Vedi was perhaps not recognised by him, though, as an etymologist, such explanations should usually catch his fancy.

But Durgācārya, his commentator, would not leave it at that. He is interested in the student knowing the other aspect of things as well. He writes

Saramā devaśunītyaitihāsikapakṣeṇa / Mādhyamikā vāk Nairuktapakṣeṇa / Sā kasmāt / Saraṇāt gamanāt / Durgācārya writes in the most felicitous style and that will be sufficient excuse to quote him *in extenso* --

Devapaṇayaḥ kila devagavīr apajahruḥ / tataḥ kilendrastadanveṣaṇāya tadālayam Saramām prāhiṇot / Te ca devapaṇayastām dṛṣṭvā papracchur anayarcā kim icchantīti / Idam asmannivāsasthānam Saramā kim icchantī kim asmattaḥ prārthayantī prānaṭ prāptavatī kadācid apyanāgatapūrveti / api ca dūre hyadhvā / mahadetad adhvānam na yadṛcchayā śakyam āgantum / Ya eva jaguriḥ syāt bhṛśam gantā sa eva śakta āgantum / Parācaiḥ parāñcanairacitaḥ parāṅmukhair añcanair gamanair acito gataḥ viprakṛṣṭo devanivāsāt / yato brūmaḥ / He Sarame kāsmehitiḥ kā tava asmāsvarthahitiḥ arthasyādhānam / ko'smatto'rthas tava prāptavyo'bhipreta āsīt yenāyam atimahānadhvā vyavasita āgantum / api ca kā paritakmyāsīt / kim paritakanam / api nāma sukhā rātrir anantarā tavāsīt / paritakmyā rātriḥ / takmetyuṣṇanāma takater gatyarthasya / sarvato hi tadgatam bhavati / tadenām ubhayataḥ parigṛhya vartata iti paritakmyā rātriḥ / api ca / katham Rasāyā ataraḥ payāmsi / Rasā nāma nadī adhyardhayojanavistārā / tasyāḥ payāmsyatidustarāṇi katham ataraḥ katham tīrṇavatyasi / athavā /

31. Nirukta Ed. R. G. Bhadkamkar with Durga's commentary, Vol. 2, pp. 1067-1070 (1942). Bombay Sanskrit Series, No. LXXXV.

katham rasāni tānyudakāni / api nāma svādūni / api śrāntāyāstavāntarā vāsāḥ keṣvāsanniti /

Devaśunīndreṇa prahitā iti nidānaprakhyāpanam mantrārthābhivyaktaye / samūde samvādam kṛtavatītyarthaḥ / Ityākhyānavidaḥ evam manyante /

Vākpakṣe tu cirakālīna vṛṣṭivyuparame kadācid abhinavameghasamplave sahasaiva stanayitnum upaśrutya kuta iyam mādyamikā vāk cireṇāgateti vismitas tām asūyanniva bravīti kimicchantī Saramā iti / Idam asmacchrotram ciram anāgamya Saramā mādhyamikā vāk kim icchantī prānaṭ prāptavatī / api ca / dūre hi adhvā / cirakālaśruteyam asmābhiḥ / jaguriḥ bhṛśam yo gantā syāt sa ciravicchinnam etad varṣavartma punar āgacchet santanuyāt parācaiḥ parāṅmukhaiḥ etad acintyam / Ciranaṣṭam ityarthaḥ / api ca / kāsmehitiḥ / kim asmāsvarthābhidhānam āsīt pūrvam tava he Sarame yenāgamaḥ / kim vā na jātam yenāpunarāgamaḥ / api ca / ciraproṣitāyās tava kim paritakanam āsīt / Antarikṣanadyā api mahatyā Rasāyāḥ katham ataraḥ payāmsi / katham atibahūnyudakāni saṁkṣobhyātmānam pratilabdhavatyasi iti vā /

" Vāg vai Saramā " (MS 4.6.4)

iti hi vijñāyate //

It is evident that the commentator is at pains to explain the so-called Nairuktapakṣa. The samanvaya is hard to understand. Writing in an age when Vedic knowledge was handed down by tradition, both in text and content, Durgācārya has indeed presented a traditional interpretation. For, much of the Vedic cult was pursuit of the intellect rather than of common practice. Singnificant also is the fact that the Vāk-identity of Saramā is sponsored by the Yajus-saṁhitās (KS, MS, VS). This is definitely expressed by Mahīdhara[32] commentator of Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā while explaining 33.59 which is a repetition of RV 3.31.6 as above indicated. Having commented on the mantra first as interpreted by the sacrifice he says : " Evam adhiyajñam mantro vyākhyātaḥ / Bahvṛcānāṁ tu samvādasūktam idam." And a fresh derivation of the name Saramā is also suggested : " Saha ramante devā viprā vā yasyām sā Saramā vāk". On the whole it should be repeated that the superimposition of the Vāk-identity fails to go home. Coming after Durga and Sāyaṇa, Mahīdhara has faithfully rendered the Yajus-tradition.

V

BṚHADDEVATĀ

(*a*) Saramā is included among the deities and deified objects belonging to Indra's sphere.[33]

32. His commentary is known as Veda-dīpa. Ed. A. Weber with the text of the VS (1852) in three parts.

33. Rākā Vāk Saramāptyāś ca Bhṛgavo'ghnyā Sarasvatī
Yamyurvaśī Sinīvālī Pathyā Svastir Uṣāḥ kuhūḥ //
Connected with ... Tasyaitasyāśraye'ditiḥ (St.124) BD 1.128.

(*b*) Saramā is, then, one of the names of Vāc in her middle sphere. It is said that Vāc has three forms terrestrial, middle and celestial:

Pārthivī Madhyamā Divyā Vāgapi trividhā tu yā
* * *
Eṣaiva Durgā bhūtvarcam kṛtvā syāt sūktabhāginī
Tannāmāni Yamīndrāṇī Saramā Romaśorvaśī //[34]

(*c*) Saramā is mentioned as one of the Brahmavādinīs (female seers) among others like Ghoṣā, Godhā, Apālā, etc.

Ghoṣā Godhā Viśvavārā Apālopaniṣanniṣat /
Brahmajāyā Juhūr nāma Agastyasya svasāditiḥ /
Indrāṇī cendramātā ca Saramā Romaśorvaśī /
Lopāmudrā ca nadyaś ca Yamī nārī ca Śāśvatī /
Śrīr Lākṣā Sārparājñī Vāk Śraddhā Medhā ca Dakṣiṇā /
Rātrī Sūryā ca Sāvitrī Brahmavādinya īritāḥ //[35]

It is difficult to believe that if Saramā, the Brahmavādinī and Saramā the messenger of Indra, were the same, the latter could have brought upon herself the ill repute stated in the following passage of the same Bṛhaddevatā.

(*d*) BD 8.24-36.

24. Asurāḥ Paṇayo nāma Rasāpāranivāsinaḥ
Gāste'pajahrur Indrasya nyagūhaṁś ca prayatnataḥ /

25. Bṛhaspatis tathāpaśyat dṛṣṭvendrāya śaśaṁsa ca
Prāhiṇot tatra dūtye'tha Saramām Pākaśāsanaḥ /

26. Kimityatrāyujābhis tām papracchuḥ Paṇayo'surāḥ
kutaḥ kasyāsi kalyāṇi kim vā kāryam ihāsti te /

27. Athābravīt tān Saramā dūtyaindrī vicarāmyaham
yuṣmān vrajam cānviṣyantī gāś caivendrasya pṛcchataḥ /

28. Viditvendrasya dūtīm tām asurāḥ pāpacetasaḥ
Ūcur mā Sarame gās tvam ihāsmākam svasā bhava /

29. Vibhajāmo gavām bhāgam māhitā ha tataḥ punaḥ
Sūktasyāsyāntyayā carcā yugmābhis tveva sarvaśaḥ /

30. Sābravīnnāham icchāmi svasṛtvam vā dhanāni vā
Pibeyam tu payas tāsām gavām yās tā nigūhatha /

31. Asurās tām tathetyuktvā tadājahruḥ payas tataḥ
Sā svabhāvācca laulyācca pītvā tat paya āsuram /

34. BD 2.77. The above enumeration is supported by the Nighaṇṭu (ch. V) with slight differences here and there. Macdonell draws attention to the fact that Durgā, not being a Vedic goddess, is not to be found in the Naighaṇṭuka and therefore holds that the line is an interpolation. The line, in his opinion, interrupts the sense of the passage, besides giving half a śloka too much for the varga. " It must however have been an early interpolation as it occurs in Mss. of both groups." See BD (Tr. and notes), p.58 under St. 77.

35. BD 2.82-84.

32. Param samvananam hṛdyam balapuṣṭikaram tataḥ
Śatayojanavistārām atarat tām Rasām punaḥ /

33. Yasyāḥ pāre pare teṣām puram āsīt sudurjayam
Papracchendraś ca Saramām kaccid gā dṛṣṭavatyasi /

34. Sā neti pratyuvācendram prabhāvādāsurasya tu
Tām jaghāna padā kruddhaḥ udgiranti payas tataḥ /

35. Jagāma sā bhayodvignā punar eva Paṇīn prati
Padānusāripaddhatyā rathena harivāhanaḥ /

36. Gatvā jaghāna ca Paṇīn gāś ca tāḥ punar āharat /[36]

Translation—

24. " There were demons called Paṇis who dwelt on the farther bank of the Rasā. These carried off the cows of Indra and hid them away carefully.

25. Bṛhaspati saw (it was) thus, and having seen it he reported it to Indra. Then the Chastiser of Pāka (Indra) dispatched Saramā thither on a message.

26. In the (hymn) " what ? " (Kim 10.108) the Paṇi demons interrogated her with the uneven stanzas, (saying) " Whence (do you come) ? To whom do you belong, fair one ? Or what is your business here ? "

27. Then Saramā addressed them : " I wander about as the messenger of Indra, seeking you and (your) stall and the kine of Indra who is asking for them.

28. On learning that she was the messenger of Indra, the wicked demons said : " Do not depart, Saramā, be our sister here.

29. Let us divide our share of the cows, be not unfriendly (ahitā) henceforth again."

And with the last stanza of this hymn (10.108.11), as well as the even ones throughout,

30. She said, " I do not desire either sisterhood (with you) or (your) wealth, but I should like to drink the milk of those cows which you are hiding there."

31. The demons saying " Yes " to her, then brought her the milk. She having from natural taste and greed, drunk the demons' milk—

32. excellent, charming, delightful, stimulating strength—then again crossed the Rasā which extended a hundred leagues,

36. Some of the lines irresistibly remind one of the Rāmāyaṇa style. It may be phantasy to jump on identities or postulate the lend-and-borrow theory : but pray, the phrase ' Śatayojanavistārām ' by its sense and setting suggests Hanuman's flight over the 100-league-ocean. (Rāmāyaṇa : Sundarakāṇḍa—Canto 1). Oertel draws attention (JAOS 19, 2nd half, p. 99 fn.) to the fact that H. Jacobi compares the finding of Sītā by Hanumạt to Saramā's search for the cows (Das Rāmāyaṇa, 1893, p.133).

37. In the notes Macdonell draws attention to Oldenberg's remarks in ZDMG 1898, p. 414 f. The remarks happen to be from the pen of Böhtlingk. Just a slip of the pen, repeated in the note on stanza 30.

33. On the farther bank of which was their impregnable stronghold. And Indra asked Saramā, " You have seen the cows, I hope ? "

34. But she under the influence of the demons replied " no " to Indra. He, enraged, struck her with his foot. She then, vomiting the milk,

35. went trembling with fear, back again to the Paṇis. The Lord of bay steeds (Indra) on his car, by the track which followed her steps,

36. went and smote the Paṇis and brought back the cows.

It must be conceded at the outset that this narrative, short and sweet, is complete in itself. It leaves no doubt in the mind of the listener as the threads are quite clear. The Paṇis stole Indra's cows. Bṛhaspati made the ' first information report ' to Indra whereupon the latter set Saramā on the investigation. She was quite successful, but, alas, poor thing, she allowed herself to be enticed by the enemy. But let us see : In stanza 30, she clearly rejects the offer of a bribe from the demons and refuses to recognise any sisterhood with them. On second thoughts however, she asked for the milk of those cows which they were hiding there. The demons thought that she had come round or, at least, that she became vulnerable. They said ' yes ' and brought the milk. But it was āsuram payaḥ, apparently cultured with witchcraft, had its effect surely upon the victim and mark we, therefore, the description of the milk in the next stanza (32. param, samvananam, hṛdyam, balapuṣṭikaram—excellent, charming, delightful, stimulating strength) which attributes warrant us to think that the milk was enchanted and certainly was not the milk of Indra's cows. But how did Saramā, who handled the case so far with such deftness, suddenly grow so stupid as to spread a trap for herself ? She perhaps thought that, by claiming the milk of those cows *i.e.* Indra's cows and by getting it, she would, in a way, get assured of the surrender of the cows : a kind of earnest-money as it were. But she miserably failed and was outwitted.[38] So it is just possible to exonerate her from the charge of accepting a bribe, for, only in the elation of her success, she tripped and got caught in her own net. It is, at any rate, discreet to observe that the Ṛgvedic hymn 10.108 closes with the final speech of Saramā which administers a warning to the enemies. The sequel is left to fancy. The fact of Saramā's treachery is not borne out by corroborative evidence, as her faithful service has been, for instance, by the JB and the Śātyāyanaka. RV 3.31.6^{c}—agram nayat supadī—must set all suspicion against her at rest. She led forth, fleet-footed that she was, which is a high compliment for her rôle in the whole episode, pronounced by no less a Vedic Authority than Viśvāmitra.

38. The situation reminds one of Hanumān's reflections on the duties and responsibilities of a messenger. *e.g.* Ghātayanti hi kāryāṇi dūtāḥ paṇḍita-māninaḥ. Rāmāyaṇa, (Sundara 2.38). Kārye karmaṇi nirvṛtte yo bahūnyapi sādhayet / pūrvakāryāvirodhena sa kāryam kartum arhati // (*Ibid.* 41.5).

VI

SARVĀNUKARAMAṆĪ

The Sarvānukramaṇī of Kātyāyana says—

Kimicchantī Paṇibhir asurair nirūḷhā gā anveṣṭum Saramām devaśunīm Indreṇa prahitām ayugbhiḥ Paṇayo mitrīyantaḥ procuḥ sā tān yugmāntyābhir anicchantī pratyācaṣṭe /[39]

Ṣaḍguruśiṣya's commentary thereon —

Atharṣi-devatā-jñānāya kathām kathayati / kathā caivam / Purā khalu Bṛhaspater Indrapurohitasya gāvo Balāsurabhrūkuṭītaṭaiḥ Paṇināmakair asurair hṛtā Balapuram prāpya suguptasthāne sthāpitā āsan / Atha Bṛhaspati-preritenendreṇa naṣṭānveṣaṇam kṛtvā Saramā nāma devaśunī prahitā babhūva / Sā ca Balapurasamīpe Rasākhyām mahānadīm uttīrya Balapuram prāpya sarvam vicintya gupte sthāne tā gā dadarśeti / Tatra Paṇinā-mabhir asurair bṛhaspatigṛhādāhṛtya nirūḷhā Balapure guptāḥ sthāpitā gā anveṣṭum indreṇa prahitām Saramām devaśunīm śvajātīyām devatām mṛgayādiṣvindrasya sādhanabhūtām asya sūktasyāyugbhir ṛgbhiḥ pañcabhir ādyātṛtīyādibhiḥ Paṇayo mitrīyantaḥ Devaśunyā saha mitratvam ātmana icchantaḥ (mitrāt kyaci ītvam śatari jaṣi ca rūpam) praṇayapūrvakam ukta-vantaḥ / Sā ca devaśunī tān yugmāntyābhir yugmabhir dvitīyācaturthyādībhir ekādaśyā ceti ṣaḍbhiḥ pratyācaṣṭe /

Paṇyuktau Saramā devī taduktau Paṇayastathā //[40]

The brief reference to the story in the Sarvānukramaṇī text has nothing to add to our information. But one word is significant that Saramā, unwilling (anicchantī) to accept their offer of friendship, repudiated them. This stresses the fact that the reflection brought on her character according to the Bṛhaddevatā is to be discounted. By the time that Ṣaḍguruśiṣya writes, it can be noticed that even the broad outlines have been tampered with. The Aṅgirasas are completely out of the picture. The cows belong to Bṛhaspati specifically and he is designated as Indra's priest (Indra-purohita). Paṇis are slaves who are at the beck and call of the demon Bala, hence the stolen cows were hidden in Bala's city. Saramā is the dog of heaven but goddess belonging to the canine species, helpful to Indra in the sport of hunting etc. (śvajātīyām devatām, mṛgayādiṣv Indrasya sādhana-bhūtām).

It seems incongruous however that, if the demon Bala was the overlord, if the cows were stolen by the Paṇis evidently at the behest of their chieftain, and, further, if the booty was hidden in Bala's capital, Indra's messenger Saramā should have talks with the servants, the Paṇis, and, that the Paṇis could speak so authoritatively and even offer terms on the spot. Bala's superior strength and frequent

39. p. 42 Macdonell's edition.

40. Vedārtha-dīpikā of Ṣaḍguruśiṣya accompanying the Sarvānukramaṇī, Macdonell's edition, p.160.

conflict with Indra as suggested in other parts of the Ṛgveda are perhaps responsible for his advent into the format of this story. The clear lines of the original, owing to addition and expansion, have already become hazy in the imagination of posterity and inconsistency in detail here and there should not matter for a credulous folk!

VII

SĀYAṆA

Sāyaṇa in his Vedārtha-prakāśa (commentary on RV-Saṁhitā):[41]

(A) Following are the contexts where Saramā's name is mentioned as well as the incident of the recovery of the stolen cows.

(1) 1.62.3 The text of Sāyaṇa's prefatory remarks on this mantra with its argument as well, is quoted above (see *supra* fn. 9).

(2) 1.72.8 In the course of the comment, Sāyaṇa says—

'Tvatsādhyena yāgena prīta Indro gavām anveṣaṇāya Saramām nāma devaśunīm preṣitavān / Sā ca Saramā gavām sthānam avagatyendrasya nyavedayat / Indraś ca tān aṅgiraso gāḥ prāpayat / Ata etat sarvam tvam eva kṛtavān'/

The Ṛk is in praise of Agni.

(3) 3.31.6 The story background of this verse is supplied by Sāyaṇa while explaining the previous verse which also alludes to the event: It runs as follows:

> Purā kilāṅgirasām gāvaḥ Paṇināmakair asurair apahṛtya nigūḍhe kasmiṁścit parvate sthāpitāḥ / Te cāṅgirasas tatprāptyartham Indram tuṣṭuvuḥ / Stutaś ca sa Indro gavānveṣaṇāya Devaśunīm prāhiṇot / Sā ca gavām gaveṣaṇaparā satī tat sthānam alabhata / Tayā vijñāpita Indras tā gāḥ ānīyā'ṅgirobhyaḥ prādād ityaitihāsikī kathā /

The affair of the heavenly cows is directly or indirectly suggested in the preceding and succeeding verses *viz.* 3.31.5 and 7. As certain problems arise out of a perusal of these three verses it is better to consider them together. Prof. H. D. Velankar translates them as follows:[42]

3.31.5. The wise (Aṅgirasas) dug out (a path reaching) upto (the cows) dwelling in the strong (fortress of Vala), the seven priests urged themselves forward with a bold (prācā) spirit. They discovered all the paths of Ṛta. Knowing these, Indra entered (the cave of Vala) with respect (for the Aṅgirasas).

41. Max Müller's 2nd Edn. 1892 Oxford, and the edition of the Vaidika Saṁśodhana Māṇḍala (Poona) the last volume of which was published last year (1946). [Vol. V - Indices - since published].

42. Journal of the University of Bombay, Vol. 3 (1934-35) Part VI, p. 8 f. Prof. Velankar has translated and annotated the Hymns to Indra by the Viśvāmitras (1935), Vāmadevas (1938), Atris (1939), Gṛtsamadas (1940), Bhāradvājas (1942), Vasiṣṭhas (1944), of the VIII Maṇḍala (1945). He has made "full use of all the existing material on Ṛgvedic studies. Special mention however, must be made of the two great German scholars, Oldenberg and Geldner."

3.31.6. When Saramā found out the fissure in the rocky cave (of Vala), she at the same time found out (sadhryak kaḥ) the great and ancient food (or protection *i.e.* the cows) thereby. The light-footed Saramā led (herself or Indra and Aṅgirasas) into the presence (agram) of the never-perishing (cows). As she well recognised it, she was the first to go in the direction of their bellowing.

3.31.7. The great poet (*i.e.* the leader of the Aṅgirasas) went (to the mountain) seeking its friendship, and the mountain did sweeten its contents for the pious man (*i.e.* kept the cows ready for delivery). The brave god, fighting along with his youthful friends (Maruts) did win (the cows), and then immediately did Aṅgiras begin to sing.[43]

It is clear that the fifth stanza above refers to the recovery of the cows after attacking the enemy's stronghold. This feat was chiefly the work of the Seven Priests who are generally identified with the Aṅgirasas. Indra acknowledges their service with respect. Saramā is nowhere in the picture ! The next verse (6) also relates the adventure of redeeming the heavenly cows. But Saramā figures prominently.[44] She led herself or, Indra and the Aṅgirasas, to the presence of the imperishable kine. The seventh stanza contemplates quite another picture : the leader of the Aṅgirasas went to the mountain seeking friendship, the mountain did sweeten its contents (asūdayat[44a] garbham) for the pious man (*i.e.* kept the cows ready for delivery). If so, no fight at all, the object is gained. But the text continues to say the brave god, fighting along with his youthful friends (the Maruts) did win (the cows), and then immediately did Aṅgiras begin to sing. This confuses a bit : if the mountain, in deference to the pious man was willing to surrender the cows, there should be no work for the brave god and the friends. In all the exploits of Indra, clearing a cloud or rending a rock asunder is a feature; without this feat, did the fight take place at all, is the question.

It seems to me that the seventh stanza is a sequel to the 6th, the sequence is logical : Saramā led the way, Indra, always desiring (or working for) friends, followed. And lo, —perhaps Saramā's threat to the Paṇis (RV 10.108) had effect—

43. The text of the above verses is as follows :

5. Vīḷaú satír abhí dhírā atṛndan
 prācāhinvan mánasā saptá víprāḥ /
Viśvām avindan pathyām ṛtásya
 prajānánn it tā́ námasā́ viveśa //

6. Vidád yádī Sarámā rugṇám ádreḥ
 máhi pāthaḥ pūrvyám sadhryak kaḥ /
Ágram nayat supády ákṣarāṇām
 ácchā rávam prathamā́ jānatī́ gāt //

7. Ágacchad u vípratamas sakhīyán
 ásūdayat sukṛ́te gárbham ádriḥ /
Sasā́na máryo yúvabhir makhasyán
 áthābhavad áṅgirāḥ sadyó árcan //

44. " It is evident that the poet is anxious to give the credit of the discovery of the cows to Saramā." H. D. Velankar, Notes on p. 9 JUB. 1935, Part VI.

44a. from svad=sweeten ? *cf.* VG 556, but see also VG 554 a. sūd=make pleasant: causative sūd-áya.

the mountain had kept its contents (the cows) ready to be handed over. Meanwhile the Maruts (the leader with his young group) joined the chief, and Aṅgiras immediately offered compliments to their Lord. The translation may be restated as follows :[45]

And verily, the Most Wise went after, he who always desires friends for himself, the mountain surrendered its contents to him of great deeds. The chief of the Maruts (maryaḥ) with his youthful group joined in order to felicitate him. And Aṅgiras promptly set himself to praise.

If it be granted, then, that the sixth and the seventh stanzas are composite, could we reconsider the explanation of the 5th stanza? As already stated, the part played by the Aṅgirasas is stressed there, that, in fact, they did the whole thing, dug an (underground) path to the mountain cave etc. and that Indra had only to go and bring the cows. Saramā is not wanted at all. Let us now consider the other references in RV itself. RV I 62.3 definitely says " Indrasyāṅgirasām ceṣṭau vidat Saramā tanayāya dhāsim "—Saramā obtained food for progeny on the occasion of her deputation by the desire of Indra and Aṅgirasas.[46] RV 5.45.7 emphasises the same when, it says " Ṛtam yatī Saramā gā avindad viśvāni satyāṅgirāś cakāra "—Saramā by adopting the path of Truth discovered the cows, and Aṅgiras made good the promise to the entire world. Both Saramā and the Aṅgirasas are extolled here. And finally RV 10.108 must convince all about Sarama's mission to the Paṇis as Indra's Messenger (Indrasya dūtīḥ). Thus Saramā's rôle in the whole affair is remarkable. Having regard to this background we shall read 3.31.5 again :

Vīḷaú satī́r abhí dhī́rā atṛndan
prācā́hinvan mánasā saptá víprāḥ /
Víśvām avindan pathyā̄m ṛtásya
prajānánn ít tā́ námasā viveśa //

45. With the following notes—

(*a*) Vipratamaḥ—atiśayena medhāvī—Sāyana.

(*b*) Sakhīyan (aṅgirobhis saha) sakhitvamātmana icchan. Taken to qualify vipratamaḥ, not adriḥ. Because Indra always worked for the good of the gods, desirous to endear himself to them. Every account of this story says that either Aṅgiras or Bṛhaspati urges upon Indra to take action. He took, only to oblige them. Thus sakhīyan more appropriately refers to Indra's desire for friendship at home with Aṅgiras and others rather than with the mountain.

(*c*) It is not an unreasonable happening if, as a result of Saramā's warning, the Paṇis, evasive as they were, prone to harass rather than fight a pitched battle, left the cows in the mountain cave and ran away. The impression is that the Paṇis and other tribesmen were a constant menace to the gods' smooth living. So why should they run the risk of being once for all destroyed by facing Indra on the battlefield ?

(*d*) *cf.* Monier-Williams : Sanskrit-English Dictionary under marya.

(*e*) makhasyan = makhitum icchan. According to Dhātupātha, (132-159) makha makhi ṇakha ṇakhi etc. are all gatyarthas *i.e.* meaning to go. *cf.* Monier-Williams under makha, the root means to worship, makha adj. Ved. " active, lively, sprightly, cheerful, free (said of the Maruts etc.)." makhasyan may therefore mean desiring to worship, hence, felicitate.

46. Sāyaṇa. Indrasya Aṅgirasām ṛṣīṇām ca iṣṭau preraṇe sati.

It may be translated thus :

The strong-minded Seven Priests troubled themselves (atṛndan)[47] much with regard to (abhi) (the cows) pent up (satīh) in the stronghold (vīḷau) : they propitiated with devout (prācā) praise for Indra, and they found the eternal (viśvām) (Saramā) who was following the Path of Truth. Knowing all these (acts), (Indra) came in full deference (to the priests).

To conclude, one is impressed, that RV 3.31.5, 6 and 7 may be said to constitute a connected narrative of Indra's recovery of the stolen cows. The Seven Priests, noticing the fact that the cattle had been lifted, set themselves busy regarding their recovery. They praised and propitiated Indra. Then they secured the co-operation of Saramā. Indra heard their prayer and came upon the scene. Indra and the Seven Priests deputed Saramā to reconnoitre. She succeeded and led Indra and the Aṅgirasas to the presence of the cows. The Maruts also rushed to the spot, evidently to support their chief. It was a pleasant surprise however to see that the cows were ready to be led back to heaven, for, apparently, the Paṇis had fled. The Maruts offered their respectful felicitations and the Aṅgirasas showered compliments on the glorious Indra.

(4) RV 4.16.8 seems to allude to more than one event as already remarked, hence Sāyaṇa's allusion to the Saramā episode is but casual. Commenting on the 2nd line of the verse, he says : (āvír bhuvat Sarámā pūrvyám te)

Saramā devaśunī pūrvyam purā te tubhyam Paṇibhir apahṛtam godhanam āvir bhuvat prakāśayāmāsa /

We must also mark that the Aṅgirasas, all the while, praised Indra (aṅgirobhir gṛṇānaḥ).

(5–6) RV 5.45.7, 8

Sāyaṇa has alluded to the story very briefly here and there in the whole hymn. What he has said specifically under verses seven and eight has been quoted and

47. utṛdir hiṃsānādarayoḥ says the Dhātupāṭha (1539) tṛd VII P.=to trouble, kill, destroy etc., also to disregard. Sāyaṇa says upekṣām akurvan=neglected, which interpretation is to do discredit to the Seven Priests who are described as dhīrāḥ. After the cattle were lifted, the Seven Priests took great trouble with regard to their search and recovery, is the simple idea. What did they do ? First, as anybody would do in distress, they poured forth prayer to God *i.e.* Indra—prācā manasā ahinvan—Sāyaṇa—prakarṣeṇa Indram añcatīti prāk / tenendraviṣayeṇa manasā / manyata iti manaḥ stotram / Tena stotreṇāhinvan avardhayan Indram tuṣṭam akurvan (hivi, divi, dhivi, jivi prīṇanārthāḥ—Dhātupāṭha 630 ff). Secondly, viśvām ṛtasya pathyām avindan (*i.e.* viśvasambandhinīm viśvāsām prajānām indrānugraheṇa annam sampādayitrīm ata eva mātṛnirviśeṣām Ṛtasya satyasya pathyām pathi bhavām Saramām devīm avindan alabhanta ityartho'nasūyayā vicāryatām sahṛdayaiḥ tatrabhavadbhiḥ. Saramāyā devyā mātṛnirviśeṣatā nigamenaivābhipretā iti me manīṣā/ tad atrāvadhāryatām—RV 5.45.6 ápa yā mātā́ ṛṇutá vrajám góḥ /) they found the goddess (Saramā), the eternal or universal, she having found support or sustenance for the whole universe. She being one of the deities of heaven indeed followed the path of Ṛta, established order. All the gods belonged to a hegemony which had certain Laws which would be adhered to by the members in the interests of the general weal. Here was the good Saramā, light-footed, whose services, the Aṅgirasas proposed to be utilised. Prajānan it tā / tā tānyaṅgirasām karmāṇi prajānan it prakarṣeṇa jānan Indraḥ—Sāyaṇa. Indra having recognised all these preliminary efforts on the part of the Seven Priests, came forward (entered upon the scene : ā viveśa) to do his part of the duty.

considered above. Commenting on the first stanza of the hymn he says—" atra aṅgirasām paṇibhir apahṛtya girer adhaḥ sthāpitānām gavām Indreṇa vimokaḥ pratipādyate." The cows are here represented as belonging to Aṅgirasas themselves. Secondly, as already stated, the complex of construing Saramā as something other than Saramā, a heavenly being, has been introduced for the first time. Here she is either herself or the embodiment of Speech.

(7) RV 10.108

Introducing this fine hymn, which records a talk (samvāda) between Saramā (Indra's messenger) on one part and the Paṇis on the other, Sāyaṇa says—

Aindrapurohitasya Bṛhaspater goṣu Valanāmno'surasya bhaṭaiḥ Paṇināmakair asurair apahṛtya guhāyām nihitāsu satīṣu Bṛhaspatipreritenendreṇa gavām anveṣaṇāya Saramā nāma devaśunī preṣitā / Sā ca mahatīm nadīm uttīrya Valapuram prāpya guptasthāne nītās tā gā dadarśa. Atha tasminn antare Paṇaya idam vṛttāntam avagacchanta enām mitrīkartum samvādam akurvan.

According to this the stolen cattle belonged to Bṛhaspati. As the text itself is silent as to whom definitely the cows belonged, to Indra, to Aṅgirasas or to Bṛhaspati or to the gods as a community, it will not be unreasonable to assume that the gods as a community possessed one stall and that Aṅgirasas and Bṛhaspati, the Maruts and other followers of Indra were concerned with its safety. Most references, however, point to the Aṅgirasas owning it. Bṛhaspati in the Ṛgvedic context is yet Indra (Bṛhatām patiḥ). The Maruts are always stated as Indra's allies. So the ownership question may be solved in favour of the Aṅgirasas.

(B) In certain contexts where the recovery of the stolen cows is the topic though Saramā's name is not mentioned, Sāyaṇa says :—

(1) RV 1.6.5 Asti kiñcid upākhyānam / Paṇibhir devalokāt gāvo'pahṛtā andhakāre nikṣiptāḥ / Tāś cendro marudbhiḥ sahājayaditi / Etaccānukramaṇikāyām sūcitam—Paṇibhir asurair nigūḷhā gā anveṣṭum Saramām devaśunīm Indreṇa prahitām ayugbhiḥ Paṇayo mitrīyantaḥ procuḥ / mantrāntare ca dṛṣṭāntatayā sūcitam—niruddhā āpaḥ Paṇineva gāvaḥ (RV 1.32.11) iti / Tadetad upakhyānam abhipretyocyate—

(2) RV 1.32.11 Paṇināmako'suro gā apahṛtya bile sthāpayitvā biladvāram ācchādya yathā niruddhavāmstathetyarthaḥ /

Here perhaps on account of the brevity of the introduction, Sāyaṇa has not paid attention to accurate details. In the first citation above, he simply says : The demons called Paṇis stole the cows and imprisoned them in darkness. Indra won them back with the help of the Maruts. Neither Saramā nor the Aṅgirasas are mentioned.

(3) RV 2.24.6 Introducing this stanza, Sāyaṇa says:—

Gosamūhe Paṇibhir apahṛte sati Paṇīnām sthānam Saramākhyayā devaśunyā jñātvā Brahmaṇaspatinā sṛṣṭā Aṅgirasaḥ tat sthānam prāpya

gosamūham Paṇibhir nirmitā māyāś ca dṛṣṭvā asuranivāsasthānam svahastodbhūtenāgninā dagdhvā pratyāgacchan / Tadetat dvṛcenocyate /

When the Paṇis stole the cows, the Aṅgirasas traced them with the help of Saramā and reduced them to ashes with fire produced by their own hands. For once Indra is not concerned in the whole adventure! All the same Indra is the devatā of the verse and the hymn (first 12).

VIII

NĪTIMAÑJARĪ

Nītimañjarī (15th cent. A.D.)—

Dyā Dviveda, author of the Nītimañjarī with his own commentary, postulates a few ethical maxims on the basis of the Saramā legend.

1. Tattvavid api saṃsāre mūḍho bhavati lobhataḥ
Tattvajñā Saramāyācad Indram annam gavām grahe /

Though knowing the Truth, a person out of greed in this earthly life, loses all sense of values; Saramā, who knew the Truth, begged food from Indra on the occasion of redeeming the kine.

'Saramā's knowledge of the Absolute is declared in "Godhā, Ghoṣā" etc. (BD 2.82-84). Even she, caught in this worldly illusion, asked Indra food for her progeny. Any ignorant man will exert to protect the cows, but Saramā, though full of divine knowledge, lost all sense by avarice. There is a story relating to it.[48]

The story is borrowed from Sāyaṇa verbatim. Then RV 1.62.3 is quoted, as also BD 8.24-36 'which described the event connected with RV 10.108.'[49]

2. Uttame cādhame kārye dūtaḥ syād uttamo'dhamaḥ
Devadūto babhūvāgnir dūtīha Saramā Paṇīn //[50]

According as a task is big or small, the messenger also may be big or small. Messenger to the Gods became Angi, but messenger to the Paṇis, Saramā.

The messengership of Saramā is illustrated in RV 3.31.6. The mantra and Sāyaṇa's bhāṣya thereon are again repeated, and reference is made to other connected stanzas as well: *viz.* 5.45.7 and 8.[51]

3. Vakraiḥ krūratarair lubdhair na kuryāt prītisevanam /
Asuraiḥ Paṇibhir naicchan maitrīm hi Saramā purā //[52]

48. "asyā brahmajñatvam Godhā Ghoṣeti pratipāditam / Sāpi māyayā bādhitā satī Indram svatanayārtham annam yayāce / anyo'jño'pi gās trātum udyamam karoti / Sā tattvajñāpi lobhamūḍhā'bhūd ityuktam / Tatretihāsaḥ"—NM p. 40 (Nītimañjarī Ed. S. J. Joshi, Benares, 1933).

49. "Kim icchantīti sūkte (RV 10.108) proktaḥ Saramāsambandhītihāso Bṛhaddevatāyām evam varṇito'sti" Ibid. p. 41.

50. NM p. 143 f.

51. Ibid. p. 146.

52. Ibid. p. 336.

One should not contract friendship with the crooked, cruel and greedy, for, in times of yore, Saramā did not like friendship with the demons called Paṇis.

Then the story as described by Sāyaṇa and two verses from the hymn (RV 10.108.9-10) are repeated.

4. Yasya syāt saṅgatam sadbhir bhavet so'lpo'pi bhāgyavān /
Devaśunīndrasaṅgatyā jitvābhūt subhagā Paṇīn///[53]

Though small, a person who acquires contact with the good will rise in fortune. The 'divine bitch' by her association with Indra conquered the Paṇis and became great.

The victory of Saramā is reflected in RV 10.108.11, which is quoted in support of the moral And so much from Sāyaṇa's commentary as usual.

IX

RĀMĀYAṆA

There is no reference to Saramā in the Rāmāyaṇa. One episode is however found in the Uttarakāṇḍa[54] of how Rāma meted out justice in favour of a Sārameya (descendant of Saramā) against a dvija, who beat the former without reason. The two cantos that relate the story elaborately are shown in printed editions as interpolations. And as the entire Uttarakāṇḍa also is not credited with authenticity there is no need for considering the reference here.

X

MAHĀBHĀRATA

(1) An account similar to the one cited from the Rāmāyaṇa is given in the Pauṣyaparva. It is as follows :

> Janamejayaḥ Pārikṣitaḥ saha bhrātṛbhiḥ Kurukṣetre, dīrghasatram upāste / Tasya bhrātaras trayaḥ Śrutasena, Ugraseno Bhīmasena iti // 1
>
> Teṣu tat satram upāsīneṣu tatra śvā'bhyāgacchat Sārameyaḥ / Sa Janamejayasya bhrātṛbhir abhihato rorūyamāṇo mātussamīpam upāgacchat // 2
>
> Tam mātā rorūyamāṇam uvāca / kim rodiṣi / kenāsyabhihata iti // 3
>
> Sa evam ukto mātaram pratyuvāca / Janamejayasya bhrātṛbhir abhihato'smīti // 4

53. Ibid., p. 388.

54. Two cantos after canto 59 of the Uttara-kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki, Nirnyasagar Edition with the commentary Tilaka.

Tam mātā pratyuvāca / vyaktam tvayā tatrāparāddham yenāsyabhihata iti // 5

Sa tām punar uvāca / nāparādhyāmi kiñcit / nāvekṣe havīṃṣi / nāvaliha iti // 6

Tacchrutvā tasya mātā Saramā putraśokārtā tat satram upāgacchat yatra sa Janamejayas saha bhrātṛbhir Dīpasatram upāste // 7

Sa tayā kruddhayā tatroktaḥ / ayam me putro na kiñcid aparādhyati / kimartham abhihata iti /

Yasmāccāyam abhihato'napakārī tasmād adṛṣṭam tvām bhayam āgamiṣyatīti // 8

Sa Janamejaya evam ukto devaśunyā Saramayā dṛḍham sambhrānto viṣaṇṇaś cāsīt // 9[55]

Janamejaya, son of Parīkṣit, once in Kurukṣetra entered upon a long sacrifice along with his brothers. Three were his brothers by name Śrutasena. Ugrasena and Bhīmasena. 1

As they were engaged in the sacrifice, there came a dog, who was son of Saramā. Beaten by Janamejaya's brothers, he crying aloud, ran to the mother. 2

The mother told him who was weeping—why do you weap ? By whom are you beaten ? 3

Thus said, he replied to his mother—I have been beaten by the brothers of Janamejaya. 4

The mother said to him again—Evidently you have been at fault, therefore you are beaten. 5

He replied her again No, I have not wronged even a bit. I do not pry into the oblations nor do I lick them. 6

Hearing that, his mother Saramā very much moved by grief for her son went to that sacrifice where Janamejaya and his brothers were performing what is called Dīpa-satra (' Sacrifice for Light '). 7

The angry Saramā burst forth there—This my son has wronged you in no way. Why was he beaten ? Since he was beaten though innocent, an unknown calamity shall befall you. 8

Thus told by the heavenly dog Saramā, Janamejaya was very much frightened and was filled with remorse. 9

(2) Saramā is mentioned as one of several goddesses (devyaḥ) who were members of Brahma's Court.

55. Mbh. Ādiparva 3.1-9 Ed. V. S. Sukthankar (Critical Edition, BORI), 1927,

Kālakā Surabhir devī Saramā cātha Gautamī
Ādityā Vasavo Rudrā Marutaś Cāśvināvapi

* * * *

Suparṇanāgapaśavaḥ Pitāmaham upāsate // [56]

* * * *

(3) Saramā is represented as a manuṣya-graha. Regarded as a Goddess (devī), she is one of those who attacks the womb of pregnant women.

Saramā nāma yā mātā śunām devī janādhipa /
Sāpi garbhān samādatte mānusīṇām sadaiva hi // [57]

Thus in the Mahābhārata, the incident of the Sārameya reminds us of the fact that Saramā, who successfully vindicated her innocent progeny, gives an impression that by then she was regarded herself as one of the canine species. She was, however, in sufficient authority and strength to curse the Lord of the land. The second reference that she had a place in Brahma's Court reminds us of her Vedic importance. According to the third, she, still a goddess though, descended to the level of being the cause of mankind's misery. This is in striking contrast with the Vedic idea that she was responsible in securing eternal food for mankind.

XI

VARĀHA PURĀṆA

The Varāha Purāṇa relates the 'Saramopākhyāna'. In the course of a conversation between Varāha (the Boar incarnation of God Viṣṇu) and Dharaṇī (Mother Earth), the former narrates the story :

Once as a result of Durvāsas's curse Indra was ousted from Heaven by Durjaya, son of Supratīka. With all other gods and followers, he settled on earth towards the east of Vārāṇasī (Benares). In the meanwhile, Vidyut and Suvidyut, two demons, practised severe penance and took possession of the overlordship of the world after Durjaya's death, and raised a mighty army to overcome the gods. The gods meditated on how they could regain their suzerainty over heaven. Then Bṛhaspati, their priest, advised them to perform a cow sacrifice first and then all other sacrifices.[58] Then the gods gathered all cattle for sacrifice, but left them for grazing in charge of Saramā. While she was doing her duty at Dharādhara, the demons went there, saw the cows and sought advice of their preceptor, Śukra, who promptly ordered them to seize the cows. They did so but Saramā, who was

56. Mbh. Sabhāparva Ed. F. Edgerton. 11.29.31, (Critical Edition, BORI), 1944.

57. Mbh. Āraṇyakaparva, Ed. V. S. Sukthankar, 219.33 (Critical Edition, BORI), 1942.

58. Abravīt tatra devānām gurur āṅgiraso muniḥ /
Gomedhena yajadhvam vai prathamam tadanantaram // 10
Yaṣṭavyam kratubhis sarvair eṣā sthitir athāmarāḥ /
Upadeśo mayā dattaḥ kriyatām śīghra eṣa vai // 11

Varāha Purāṇa Ch. XVI, vv. 10-11. Bibliotheca Indica 1893.

attentively guarding the paths, saw them leading away the cows.[59] The demons also saw her, who knew well their ways. They wanted to square up by conciliation and, offering the milk of the cows for her to drink, requested her not to report the theft of the cows to the Lord of the Gods. So they left her in the woods and walked away with the booty. Saramā returned to the gods, trembling and paid due homage to Indra. Meanwhile the Maruts had been secretly deputed by Indra for protection of the heavenly dog. Now, they also came and stood before Indra. Indra asked Saramā ' What happened to the cows ? ' ' I know not,' she replied. Maruts were asked, and they described all that Saramā did. Then Indra rose and struck her with her foot. Milk began to flow from her mouth and Saramā made way back to where the cows were. Indra followed with his army,[60] killed the demons and recovered the cows. Then he performed many sacrifices, fought the demon hosts again and re-established himself as Lord of Heaven.

The impression, by the time of this Purāṇa, is certainly that Saramā was a dog gifted of course with heavenly powers. But her being enticed by a cup of milk was rather earthly. The only support for this version is the Bṛhaddevatā account, whereas the evidence for her exemplary conduct appears to be overwhelming.

XII

RECENT OPINIONS

Professor Kühn was the first, we are told, ' to analyse the meaning and character of Saramā, arriving at the conclusion that Saramā meant storm,[61] and that the Sanskrit word was identical with the Teutonic *storm* and with the Greek *horme*. Disagreeing with this theory, Max Müller has tried to prove that Saramā is Dawn, rather one of the many names of Dawn. The myth is a reproduction of the old

59. Hṛtāsu tāsu Saramā mārgānveṣaṇatatparā
Apaśyat sā Diteḥ putrair nītā gāvo dharādhare
Daityair api śunī dṛṣṭā dṛṣṭamārgā viśeṣataḥ / 17
Dṛṣṭvā te tām ca sāmnaiva sāmapūrvam idam vacaḥ
Āsām gavām tu dugdhvaivam kṣīram tvam Sarame śubhe
Pibasvaivam iti proktvā tasyai tad dadur añjasā / 18
Datvā tu ksīrapānam tu tasyai te daityanāyakāḥ
Mā bhadre devarājāya gāstvimā vinivedaya// 19
Evam uktvā tato daityā mumucus tām śunīm vane (Ibid st. 17-19).

60. Tasyāś ca maruto devā devendreṇa nirūpītāh //
Gūḍham gacchata rakṣārtham devaśunyā mahābalāḥ //
* * * *
Tām devarājaḥ papraccha gāvaḥ kim Sarame'bhavan /
Evam uktā tu Saramā na jānāmīti cābravīt// 21
* * * *
Kathayāmāsur avyagrāḥ karma tat Saramākṛtam //
* * * *
Tasyendrapādaghātena kṣīram vaktrāt prasusruve /
Sravatā tena payasā sā śunī yatra gābhavat /
Jagāma tatra devendraḥ sahasainyas tadā dhare / 29 (Ibid).

61. Explained by Aufrecht as follows : " When the clouds (Paṇis) have withheld the water (the cows) from the thirsty earth for a long time, the sky-god (Indra) being stirred up by the prayers and sacrifices of men, sends as his fore-runner the Storm (Saramā), then at last he personally cleaves the hidden clouds with lightning and thunderbolt " ZDMG 1859, p. 497.

story of the break of day. The bright cows, the rays of the sun or the rain clouds—for both go by the same name—have been stolen by the powers of darkness, by the Night and her manifold progeny. Gods and men are anxious for their return. But where are they to be found? They are hidden in a dark and strong stable, or scattered along the ends of the sky, and the robbers will not restore them. At last in the farthest distance the first signs of the Dawn appear, she peers about, and runs with lightning quickness, it may be, like a hound after a scent, across the darkness of the sky. She is looking for something, and, following the right path, she has found it. She has heard the lowing of the cows, and she returns to her starting place with more intense splendour. After her return there rises Indra, the god of light, ready to do battle in right earnest against the gloomy powers, to break open the strong stable in which the bright cows were kept, and to bring light, and strength, and life back to his pious worshippers. This is the simple myth of Saramā, composed originally of a few fragments of ancient speech, such as: 'the Paṇis stole the cows', *i.e.* the light of day is gone, 'Saramā looks for the cows', *i.e.* the Dawn is spreading, 'Indra has burst the dark stable' *i.e.* the sun has arisen."[62]

Coming to the field of comparative mythology, Max Müller recognises "in Helen, the sister of the Dioskuroi, the Vedic Saramā, their names being phonetically identical, not only in every consonant and vowel but even in their accent."[63]

Bloomfield identifies the 'four-eyed bitch' mentioned in AV 5.20.7 with Saramā:

> "Thou art the eye of Kaśyapa and the eye of the four-eyed bitch. Like the sun, moving in the bright day, make thou the Piśāca evident to me."[64]

Macdonell[65] and Keith[66] have preferred to stick to the evidence of the Vedic texts scrupulously. There is nothing in the RV directly to show that Saramā was there conceived as a dog. Saramā's part in the recovery of the cows has been duly appreciated. Sometimes the cows are spoken of in the Veda as confined by the demon Vala without reference to the Paṇis and driven out by Indra. Sometimes also, it must be pointed out, the event is alluded to without reference to Saramā, for, as we obser e elsewhere, the cattle lifting was a very usual way of provoking or harassing the enemy. Agni, Bṛhaspati and the Aṅgirasas are also actively interested in the affair. "The meaning of the myth can hardly be doubtful," Keith

62. Max Müller, Lectures on the Science of Language, Second Series, 1864, pp. 469-470.
63. Ibid. p. 471.
64. "Kaśyápasya cā́kṣur asi śunyā́ś ca caturakṣyā́ḥ /
Vīdhré sū́ryam iva śarpantaṁ mā piśācám tiráskaraḥ //
Commenting on this, Bloomfield says, "the four-eyed bitch is Saramā, the mother of the two four-eyed dogs of Yama, Śyāma and Śabala which I have explained as the Sun and the Moon" p. 404, SBE XLII and also *cf.* JASO XV, p. 163 ff. Sāyaṇa supports the identity: Catvāri akṣīṇi yasyāḥ sā caturakṣī tādṛśyāḥ śunyāḥ devānām sambandhinyāḥ saramākhyāyāḥ / cakṣur asītyanuṣaṅgaḥ / Whitney has no opinion to give in the matter, though he thinks the commentator was at pains to explain the four-eyes, as the latter says: etenāpradhṛṣyatvam uktam 'thus is indicated her invincibility'.
65. Vedic Mythology (Encyclopædia of Indo-Aryan Research) p. 161.
66. Religion and Philosophy of the Veda (Harvard Oriental Series 31 and 32) 1925, p. 192.

remarks, " when it is noted how often Indra is brought into prominence as the maker of the dawn and the finder of the Sun. The cows must be, not rain-clouds, as sometimes in the myth of Vṛtra, but the morning beams of light or perhaps the red clouds of dawn, there is little difference between the two conceptions."[67] Speaking in general terms about the appearance of the dog, or the eagle or the one-footed goat in the Veda, Keith postulates : " In all these cases there is clearly either theriomorphism or the natural association of animals with the gods on the model of the relation of man and the animals."[68] Oldenberg[69] treats the legend, we are told, (10.108) as an ætiological myth to explain men's ownership of cows. Hillebrandt[70] finds the dawn in Saramā and the sun and the moon in the Sārameyas. Appreciation of RV 10.108 in its poetic aspect has been made by several scholars, but a fine study of it is recorded by Aufrecht. The whole legend is studied briefly in its historical aspect, comparing the RV version with that of the Varāhapurāṇa. The hymn is translated and annotated. He concludes : "The old poem is remarkable for its poetical value apart from its mythological contents. The insolence and later the cowardice of the Paṇis in opposition to the earnestness and loyalty of Saramā are seen in such sharp and striking contrast that one dares to mention this poem as the most beautiful ornament of the Ṛgveda."[71]

SUMMARY

Based on the RV Saṁhitā, the Saramā story may be restated as follows : Enemies used to harass the gods now and again by stealing their cows. On one occasion, it happened that the Paṇis stole them and hid them in their stronghold. The seven priests, who are commonly known as Aṅgirasas, first noticed the loss and apprised Indra. They praised him, and, rallying the folk around, propitiated him with sacrifice, so that the great god may recover the cows. Indra naturally was pleased and, by the suggestion of the Aṅgirasas, deputed Saramā to search for the lost property and bring news. Saramā took this opportunity to claim, as reward, food for her progeny in the shape, perhaps, of the milk of the divine cows. It was granted. Then she went on her journey which was rather arduous but was fortunate enough to discover the cows after crossing the mighty river Rasā. Finding that the Paṇis had imprisoned the kine in the mountain stronghold, she took them by surprise and charged them with theft. The Paṇis made sure of her credentials, that she came as messenger from Indra. Being in such vantage and endowed with strength and strategem, the Paṇis held out against Saramā's threats. But realising her mettle, tried to persuade her not to return at all, by offering a share of the treasure and a treatment as if she were their sister. Saramā did not yield. On the other hand she warned them to flee away from the place leaving the cows for Indra or take the consequences when the irrepressible hero would

67. KRPV p. 128.
68. Ibid., p. 192, *cf.* Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 19.
69. KRPV, p. 128 fn.
70. Ibid.
71. ZDMG 1850, Saramā's Botschaft, Th. Aufrecht, a free rendering (p. 494).

pounce upon them aided by the Angirasas, the Navagvas and others. Then she returned to Indra and reported her discovery, whereupon, he granted the milk-food and much more for her progeny, which, as the seer Parāśara, son of Śakti, declares, mankind today is enjoying.[72] It is the direct result of Saramā's sagacity and influence with the Lord of the Gods. Saramā is respected by the seers and the gods as one who follows Ṛta the path of Truth or the established path. Hence she was entrusted with an important mission, and truly adhering to the Right path, she succeeded in catching the thieves. Now with the light-footed Saramā to lead the way, Indra, attended with the Aṅgirasas and the Maruts marched against the enemy, rent apart the mountain; the Paṇis had apparently fled leaving the booty behind. The Aṅgirasas convened an assembly to celebrate this victory : milk was poured profusely to all. Indra was praised and Saramā was warmly felicitated. Such is the Saramā episode construed just according to the Ṛgvedic text. It may be emphasised that the Saṁhitā has conceived and narrated the event in its most human aspects and bearings.

With the lapse of time, the great exploits and experiences of the Vedic Heroes, which were once green in everybody's memory and which were recorded in simple yet grand poetry, began to lose their freshness and point. The sacrifices expanded and the very same poetical expressions were used in several sacrificial contexts. Naturally the links became hazy, the relevancy came to be questioned. This was probably the cause of new interpretations and concepts gathering round old texts. Thus the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā unequivocally pronounced Saramā as Speech (Vāg vai Saramā). The Taittirīya Āraṇyaka construed her as the sacred altar (Vedi). The Atharva-veda has a place for Saramā, she having been invoked in connection with the ceremony of the gift of a bull (Ṛṣabhotsarga). This is quite in consonance with the atmosphere of the Atharva-veda, which was charged with magic and charm which pleased the spirits and brought gratification to the worshippers who were now far removed from the plane of the virile gods and the resplendent sages of the Ṛgveda.

The Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa, supported by the Śāṭyāyanaka, confirms the fact that Saramā took opportunity to secure the milk-food for her progeny, *viz.* mankind itself. So far as the story of the stolen cows is concerned, the JB says that Indra deputed Suparṇa first but, he having proved faithless, sent Saramā on the errand, and succeeded.

Yāska adheres to the main outlines of the original story but is disposed to designate Saramā, as Devaśunī (heavenly bitch). The cue of the betrayal motif was however taken up by the Bṛhaddevata, but the betrayal was ascribed to Saramā herself; Suparṇa is not mentioned at all. The other texts more or less agreeing with the main story, we come down to the Purāṇas, according to one of which the Vāraha, the legend is expanded on all sides : Indra's fortunes fluctuate often, he no longer enjoys world-supremacy. Now he is displaced from heaven

72. RV 1.72.8 Vidád gávyam Sarámā dṛḷhám ūrvám yénā nú kam mā́nuṣī bhójate vít /

and only after years of penance and sacrifice could he regain his old glory. Demons, other than the Paṇis, take the field, they are Vidyut and Suvidyut. Saramā is placed in charge of the cow-stall. These demons tried to lift the cows but she was quite vigilant and caught them, but alas, for the moment she fell a victim to their machinations and was lured by a draught of milk. Indra was clever enough to have deputed the Maruts to rush to her rescue in case she was attacked by anybody. Now they found out the ruse and reported to Indra. Saramā was unmasked. The cows were however recovered and the demons destroyed.

Taking up the Atharvan trend, we find Saramā as a Spirit to conjure with. She is invoked to free the child from the barking cough, for instance. She is again a ' manuṣya-graha ' which attacks the womb of the females.

Thus following Saramā through the vicissitudes of Ages, one is left with the impression that her story is full of human appeal. Her character is upright, her conduct honorable and her heart full of affection for posterity. Were she the mother of the Sārameyas, *i.e.* the two brindled hounds of Yama, Śyāma and Śabala, it was only in this sense that she was responsible for the creation of the canine species in the same manner as Kadrū became the mother of serpents and Vinatā the mother of eagles. She was herself no dog or bitch. With the actual text of the Ṛgveda before us, it is quite unwarranted, nay, uncharitable, to describe her as Devaśunī—the ' divine bitch ' as some have fancifully translated the term.

Mythological explanations of the Saramā legend have been offered by eminent scholars, saying that Saramā is the Storm or the Dawn. The tenor of Ṛgvedic poetry does not seem to favour any interpretation other than literary. Correlation of the live personalities of the Veda with the shining stars of heaven or the wonderful phenomena of Nature or the varied patterns of sacrificial tapestry has become traditional. It is a privilege of the specialist which cannot be denied. But for the common man, it is equally natural to conceive of them as quite human, as real events, inspiring and instructive.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGEND OF ŚUNAŚŚEPA

Śunaśśepa is a famous ṛṣi of old. Eight entire hymns[1] of the Ṛgveda, aggregating to 107 verses, are ascribed to his seership, wherein he has praised and propitiated various gods :[2] Prajāpati, Agni, Savitṛ, Varuṇa, Viśvedevas, Indra, Aśvins, Uṣas and Soma-pavamāna. Śunaśśepa is himself referred to by name in three mantras. Two of them[3] represent him in bonds having appealed to Varuṇa for release, whereas, the last mantra which is addressed to Agni and that by a different seer,[4] informs us that Agni released Śunaśśepa " from a thousand stakes." Thus, Śunaśśepa's deliverance from the yūpastambha is undoubtedly a vedic fact. The present attempt is to trace the growth of this germ into a spreading chestnut despite the ravages of Time.

I

ṚGVEDA

The Ṛgveda references are as follows :

(A) Verses wherein Śunaśśepa's name is mentioned.

(*a*) Tád ínnáktam tád dívā máhyamāhuḥ
tád ayám kéto hṛdá ā ví caṣṭe /
Śúnaśśépo yám áhvad gṛbhītáḥ
só asmā́n rā́jā Váruṇo mumoktu //
RV 1.24.12.

Translation—

They say that to me by night and by day, and the same sentiment strikes my heart (mind) as well. May Varuṇa the king, to whom Śunaśśepa in bonds addressed himself, liberate us.

(*b*) Śúnaśśépo hyáhvad gṛbhītáḥ
triṣvādityám drupadéṣu baddháḥ /
ávainam rā́jā Váruṇaḥ sasṛjyāt
vidvā́m̐ ádabdho ví mumoktu pā́śān //
RV 1.24.13.

1. RV 1.24 to 30 (7 hymns) 97 verses plus RV 9.3.10 verses, total 107.

2. Mentioned in the order in which they were praised (*cf.* M. Sarvā p. 6). Agni alone was approached twice (AB), once with one mantra (RV 1.24.2) and the second time with a series of 22 mantras (1.26.1-10 and 27.1-12). Geldner (Der Ṛigveda I, p. 21) takes both verses (1.24.1. and 2) as addressed to Agni. The reason, perhaps, is that " Ka " is god Prajāpati according to tradition, but an interrogative pronoun according to recent opinion. " Ko vai nāma prajāpatiḥ " (AB 3.21) iti śruteḥ kasya iti śabdasāmānyāt anayā prajāpatireva upādṛtaḥ iti gamyate—Sāyaṇa.

3. RV 1.24.12 and 13.

4. RV 5.2.7 Kumāra son of Atri is the ṛṣi.

Translation—

To three stakes bound, Śunaśśepa[5] has verily addressed himself to the son of Aditi (Varuṇa). May Varuṇa the king set this (suppliant) free, may He, (who is) wise and above restrictions, entirely remove the fetters.

(c) Śúnaś cicchépam níditam sahásrāt
yūpād amuñco áśamiṣṭa hí ṣáḥ /
evásmād agne ví mumugdhi páśān
hótaś cikitva ihá tū́ niṣádya //[6]
RV 5.2.7.

Translation—

You did liberate the fast-fettered Śunaśśepa from a thousand fold stake and he became pacified, indeed. Even so do you, O Learned Priest of the gods, Agni, sitting here (with us) loosen our bonds.

On a close study of the above verses, certain impressions are irresistible. The first two verses which are ascribed to Śunaśśepa do not seem to be his at all from a rational point of view. In the first, the worshipper prays, "May Varuṇa the king, to whom Śunaśśepa addressed himself, liberate us," that is, on the precedent of Śunaśśepa's being saved by Varuṇa, a later devotee is seeking similar favour. All right, but the very next verse says: Śunaśśepa in fetters prays to God Varuṇa: may Varuṇa set him free and may he remove the fetters. The situation must be that while Śunaśśepa is praying to the god for succour, those by the side are recommending him for Varuṇa's mercy. This is in itself reasonable, but how, at all, is it consistent with the previous verse? There, it is definitely a past event, here

5. 'triṣu drupadeṣu baddhaḥ' literally would mean 'bound to three stakes'. But the threefold nature of the stakes is not quite intelligible, whether Śunaśśepa was bound to three different posts or whether, as Sāyana says, he was tied to a single post in three places (trisaṅkhyākeṣu drupadeṣu droḥ kāṣṭhasya yūpasya padeṣu pradeśaviśeṣeṣu baddhaḥ). But, then, how to reconcile the other statement that Śunaśśepa was delivered from a thousand stakes (Śúnaś ciccépam niditam sahasrād yupād amuñcaḥ)? Wilson (Tr. Vol. I, p. 63, 1850) understands a sort of tripod and adds "its specification is consistent with the popular legend." This is to be corroborated. Geldner translates 'an drei Blöcke gebunden' (*i.e.* bound to three blocks), and says in the note: "drupadā (eigentlich wohl Fussgestell) ist der Block, in den der Gefangene gelegt wurde (AV 19.47.9, 50.1), AV 6.63.3 das Fusseisen." While describing the process of niyojana *i.e.* fastening the victim to the sacrificial post, Sāyana's commentary (AB) is somewhat interesting: Ajīgarta is supposed to say—"aham enam Śunaśśepam yūpe niyokṣyāmi raśanayā kaṭyām, śirasi, pādayor baddhvā raśanāgrasya yūpe bandhanam niyojanam tad aham kariṣyāmi." Niyojana is defined as the act of fastening with rope the victim in three parts of his person namely, the waist, the head and the feet, and then the end of the rope to be tied to the sacrificial post. Rather an unequivocal explanation, it perhaps describes the actual practice at sacrifice as Sāyana knew (*cf.* RV 1.24.15 and 25.21). With such dubious evidence, it was best to translate literally.

6. Sahasrāt anekarūpāt yūpāt (Sāyana). Regarding the unusual separation of a proper noun Śunaś ciccehepam, Sāyaṇa remarks—Śunaśśepamiti padasya madhye padāntarasya samhitāyām vyatyayenāvasthitiḥ. The advent of a different word in the middle of one word is therefore acknowledged to be an irregularity. *cf.* BD 2.115.

Śunaśśepam narāśamsam dyāva naḥ pṛthivīti ca /
Niraskṛteti prabhṛtiṣv arthādāsīt kramo yathā //

which indicates that the regular order of words was determined according to the sense, when the text read like—Sunaś ciccehepam, narā vā śamsam, dyāvā naḥ pṛthivī, niru svasāram askṛta. It is to be noted that the Padapāṭha restores the word *e.g.* Śunaḥ'śépam/ cit etc.

it is like a thing happening in our presence. The verbs used in the two verses do not help us to disentangle, because they seem to have been used indiscriminately too, *e.g.* ahvat (a-Aorist Indicative, 3rd sing. of hū, to call), mumoktu (perfect imperative, 3rd sing. of muc, to release), sasṛjyāt (perfect optative, 3rd sing. of sṛj, to emit).[7] Hence they cannot enlighten the sequence of events. The legend depicts that these mantras were uttered by Śunaśśepa in order to obtain release, whereas the two verses, just referred to regard the release as a thing of the past. Two inferences are possible. (*a*) These are not Śunaśśepa hymns at all (RV 1.24 to 30), but tradition so ascribes, *i.e.* at the Saṁhitā stage, these hymns were assembled and the occurrence of Śunaśśepa's name in the two verses was responsible for the ascription ; hence we shall accept it on faith. (*b*) Or, the two verses in question are a later insertion or interpolation, if that fearful word may be used : The various hymns seen by Śunaśśepa, handed down by tradition, were put together by the Saṁhitā-designers, in the course of which it is just possible that these two verses were inserted in order to remind themselves of that great Vedic event. However reasonable, the first inference appears rather irrational, as it carries possibilities to the very extreme. The second inference may be considered.[8] It becomes plausible if we remove the two verses from their context and review the whole collection ; then, it will read like the group of praises and psalms from any other poet of the Ṛgveda. The two verses, no doubt, lend colour to the whole group of seven hymns (RV 1.24-30) and specially to RV 1.24.1 and 2, in the light of the " Parark̥śata-gāthā " or the Śunaśśepākhyāna which is elaborately related in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.[9]

If scholars believe in the theory of interpolation as an important and inevitable factor in textual criticism, then there can be no reason to demur at this conclusion, namely, Śunaśśepa did not compose the two mantras (1.24.12) and 13), but a later poet, possibly the compilers of the Śatarcina maṇḍala. Interpolation is a natural instinct in man and as such cannot be considered a crime. Considering the texts which have been transmitted for centuries by oral tradition only—*viz.* the Veda and Vedic literature—the aspect of interpolation need not be doubted at all, " for the organs of tradition were not machines, but men."[10]

It is well-known that many verses and hymns have formed part of the later Saṁhitās of the Yajus, Sāma and Atharva-vedas. Many a variant reading has been noticed of the Ṛgvedic text.[11] Such a thing could be detected because of the availability, of the different recensions. In the case of the Ṛgveda, only the

7. MVG paragraphs 508, 490 and 489 respectively.

8. Compare Roth's opinion, analogous to this, explained by Keith in his introduction to the Rig-Veda Brāhmaṇas Translated (HOS Vol. 25—1920) p. 64.

9. 7.13-18, more of this in another section.

10. Dr. Katre, Introduction to Indian Textual Criticism (K. P. H., Bombay, 1941), p. 54. The nature and causes of corruption in transmitted texts have been analysed and no less than 19 of them have been enumerated with illustrations (chapter V). If the principles are applied to the Vedic Text-transmission as well, important results may be obtained.

11. To give an instance, please see note 22 in the previous chapter.

Śākala-Saṁhitā is what we have now. Who knows what Bāṣkala and others would have revealed in a crucial passage like this?

Another fact is worth notice. Śunaśśepa's deliverance is, to Viśvāmitra, a feather in the cap. The achievement is of no less magnitude than his crossing of the Rivers (RV 3.33). But Śunaśśepa, the god-given (Deva-rāta) son and heir to Viśvāmitra, is nowhere, even indirectly, mentioned in the Viśvāmitra maṇḍala of two and sixty hymns either by the Seer or by his descendents. Nor is this miracle refleceted anywhere among the hundred and four hymns of Vasiṣṭha, who officiated as the Brahmā priest in that sacrifice which witnessed Śunaśśepa's 'sacrifice' and deliverence. Further, it was the fancy of a member of the Atri family, —in no way connected with the affair, —to record the event in clear terms (Śúnaś cicchépam níditam sahásrāt, yūpād amuñco áśamiṣṭa hí ṣáḥ/ 5.2.7[ab]). Undoubtedly, Kumāra Ātreya (the Ṛṣi of the hymn) is describing what was current in his family circle. A slight disharmony may be discerned even here in that Agni delivered Śunaśśepa from the stakes, not Varuṇa. Strangely enough, the Saṁhitā appears to corroborate this, because Śunaśśepa, —let us believe the traditional account for the moment —after approaching God KA in the first instance (1.24.1), addresses himself next to Agni (Agnér vayáṁ prathamásyāmṛ́tānām mánāmahe cāru devásya nāma// 1.24.2).

There is, of course, an appeal to Varuṇa in 1.24.12 and 13 for freedom from the bonds, but these we have preferred to consider as later insertions. 1.24.15[12] and 1.25.21[13] appeal to Varuṇa to release the chains from the top, the middle and the bottom. The pāśa is a special attribute of Varuṇa[14] and a prayer to him should be naturally charged with that sentiment. Śunaśśepa was Varuṇa-gṛhīta[15] (seized by Varuṇa), says the Yajurveda. According to the graphic narration in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, the release from the fetters was actually effected when the three mantras in praise of Uṣas[16] were uttered one by one. So with regard to this great Deliverance, we shall revert to the original document, the Ṛgveda, and repeat the problem which faced Śunaśśepa himself—" which God's charming name shall we cherish"!

(B) Other verses indirectly bearing on the Śunaśśepa legend:

The opeining verses of the Śunaśśepa series have a peculiar appeal; hence they are recorded here—

12. Úduttamáṁ Varuṇa pāśam asmád ávādhamáṁ ví madhyamáṁ śrathāya / áthā vayáṁ āditya vraté távānāgaso áditye syāma //

13. Úduttamáṁ mumugdhi no ví pāśam madhyamáṁ cṛta / ávādhamāni jīváse //

14. Release from Varuṇa-pāśa is the burden of the prayers addressed to that God in all the Saṁhitās, most of which do not refer to the Śunaśśepa incident at all. *E.g.* the verse "Úduttamáṁ," which is a prayer to Varuṇa for release from his fetters is cited about 20 times in the various Vedic texts, it is only on two occasions it is associated with Śunaśśepa. *Cf.* Bloomfield's concordance, and VI 2.386 n4 under Śunaśśepa.

15. *Cf.* TS 5.2.1.3; KS 19.11.

16. RV 1.30.20-22 (Sa uṣasam tuṣṭāva uttareṇa tṛcena / tasya ha sma ṛcyṛcyuktāyām vi pāśo mumuce / AV 7.16).

Kásya nūnám katamásyāmṛtānām
  mánāmahe cā́ru devásya nā́ma //
kó no mahyā́ áditaye púnar dāt
  pitáram ca dṛśéyam mātáram ca //
  RV 1.24.1.

Agnér vayám prathamásyāmṛtānām
  mánāmahe cā́ru devásya nā́ma //
sá no mahyā́ áditye púnar dāt
  pitáram ca dṛśéyam mātáram ca //
  RV 1.24.2.

Translation—

Of whom or of which god among the immortals shall we cherish the charming name? Who would give us back to the great Aditi? And would I ever see father and mother?[17]

God Agni's charming name we shall cherish, for he is the first of the immortals. He would give us back to the great Aditi. And then would I see father and mother.

Shorn of the story-background, the first verse reflects the fervency with which the devotee asks himself the question: which god's name shall we cherish? Such an enquiring spirit is quite in consonance with the spirit of the Vedic seer, at the dawn of our civilization. Compare the other hymn 'Kásmai devā́ya' which has a similar appeal. But it is the reference to the father and the mother that makes the allusion to some exent absolutely reasonable if not necessary.

17. Text—pitáram ca dṛśéyam mātáram ca. This is usually understood to express the anxiety on the part of Śunaśśepa to get back to his parents, so he laments—am I destined to see my parents once again and so on. (cf. Nītimāñjarī. st. 11). This is not correct. As we agree that the verses are expressed by Śunaśśepa, it is necessary to look into the situation in which he simply ran, door to door, in search of a saviour. The idea is: thus have I been foresaken by parents who gave me birth in this world. Ah, they are going to cut me up as if I were an animal! Is there a god who could restore me to life on Earth (to Aditi)? Can I find a father and a mother once again? Let me think of Agni, he is the foremost of the gods. He will restore me to life and I would find a father and a mother (in him, *i.e.* in Agni indeed). That is how Śunaśśepa's situation is heightened with pathos. He never wished to run back to his parents. (cf. Rāmāyaṇa 1.64.4-Gorresio)

Na me'sti mātā na pitā na suhṛnna ca bāndhavāḥ /
Trātum arhasi mām tyaktam bandhubhiḥ śaranāgatam //

This is corroborated by the evidence of the Aitareya which depicts the situation graphically:

atha ha Śunaśśepa īkṣāñcakre, amānuṣam iva
vai mā viśasiṣyanti, hantāham devatā upadhāvāmīti,
sa prajāpatim eva prathamam devatānām anusasāra,
kasya nūnam katamasyāmṛtānām ityetayarcā /

As the father Ajīgarta came forward, sharpening the knife, in order to cut him up, Śunaśśepa, in utter consternation and helplessness, bursts forth with the mantra, 'kasya nūnam' ending with 'pitáram ca dṛśéyam mātarám ca'. In such a situation, that Śunaśśepa was prompted by filial love to say it, is truly incoherent. Secondly, we may observe that Śunaśśepa's lament, whether he is destined to find a father and a mother on earth when the real parents deserted him, was heard by the gods. Viśvāmitra became the father; gods blessed the change over, which was in the nature of an adoption; Śunaśśepa was named Devarāta: 'God-given'.

We may at once believe that Śunaśśepa uttered it when he was in such a predicament. It was at a later stage of course that the memorable verses found place in the Saṁhitā.

One word about the hundred verses, alleged by the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa to have been uttered by Śunaśśepa when he was yoked for the sacrifice. A perusal of the said verses will at once tell us, from their tenor and content, that they were not appropriate for the occasion.[18] A man destined to die would first pray for his life, not for cattle, not for the destruction of the enemy; nor even could he have the peace of mind to dilate upon the merits and exploits of each god in such a complacent manner, sometimes providing even sublime and serene poetry. Except for three or four verses in the whole series,[19] there is not much of a direct appeal for deliverance from the stakes. Dare we then discredit the account of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa? No, we need not discredit, but we can clearly perceive the *raison d'etre* of such a development.

Mr. Narahari[20] has related the Śunaśśepa hymns indicated in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa straight to their Ṛgvedic source, chapter and verse, about which fact, however, there was never a doubt implied or expressed. Keith's observation, with which Narahari is unable to agree,[21] was with regard not to the authenticity but to the relevancy of the Śunaśśepa hymns in their being worked into the Śunaśśepa legend. Keith has in view the subject-matter and the general trend of the hymns while making the remark in question.[22] After tracing the AB quotations to their Ṛgvedic source, Narahari declares "It is thus clear that the account given in the AB about Śunaśśepa is ratified to a very great extent by the Ṛgveda."

18. cf. Keith. JRAS (1911), p. 988, Winternitz HIL Vol. I, p. 215 (1927); Wilson quoting Dr. Rosen (Tr. Vol. I, p. 60 original edition), also Muir, OST 1. p.359.

19. RV 1.24.1,2,15; 25.21.

20. Ref. 'A Volume of Studies in Indology' presented to Prof. P. V. Kane (Poona, 1941). Mr. Narahari's article entitled 'The Legend of Śunaḥśepa in Vedic and post-Vedic Literature,' pp. 302-307.

21. "It is admittedly the case that the Ṛgveda verses which are put in the mouth of Śunaḥ-śepa have nothing to do with the legend in the Brāhmaṇa," Keith. JRAS (1911) p. 988.

22. The expression Śatarcina is thus explained by the Aitareya Āraṇyaka:

Tam śatam varṣāṇyabhyārcat tasmāt śatam varṣāṇi puruṣāyuṣo bhavanti, tam yacchatam varṣāṇyabhyārcat tasmāt śatarcinas tasmācchatarcina ityācakṣata etam eva santam // 2.2.1.

"For a hundred years he approached it. Therefore a hundred are the years of the life of man. Because he approached him for one hundred years, therefore, they are the Śatarcins. Therefore they call him who is (prāṇa) the Śatarcins." Tr. Keith (Anecdota Oxoniensia Series, Oxford).

But Ṣaḍguruśiṣya (Macdonell, Sarvā. p. 59) has a more rational explanation. Ādyamaṇḍalasthā ṛṣayaḥ Śatarcina iti saṁjñitāḥ/ Ṛcām śatam śatarcam/ Ādyasyarṣeḥ ṛkśatayogena chatrinyāyena śatarcinaḥ sarve/ Dvyadhike'pi śatoktirbāhulyāt/ Uktam hi—

Śatarcisaṁjñā vijñeyā hyādyamaṇḍaladarśinaḥ /
Dadarśādau Madhucchandā dvyadhikam yad ṛcām śatam /
Tatsāhacaryād anye'pi vijñeyās tu Śatarcinaḥ /
Acchatrāś chatriṇaikena yathā vai chatriṇo'bhavan /

According to the tabular statement of the Sarvānukrama, prepared by Max Müller, as complement to his first edition of RV with Sāyana's commentary, there are altogether 16 seers (191 hymns and 1971 verses) in the first maṇḍala, many of the seers are centurions *e.g.* Madhucchanda Vaiśvāmitra (102), Medhātithi Kāṇva (143), Śunaśśepa (97), Hiraṇyastūpa (71), Ghaura Kāṇva (96), Praskaṇva

No clear evidence is adduced to support this statement which is rather misleading and untrue. The quotations which are in the nature of praise and prayer to the several gods, do by no stretch of imagination, suggest any detail of the story. The Ṛgvedic statement has only this much to say that Śunaśśepa who had been bound by fetters to the sacrificial post was liberated by Varuṇa (1.24.12) or by Agni (5.2.7) according to another seer. It is only reasonable to suppose that the Śatarcina maṇḍala[22] was compiled, by putting together the centurion seers and their hymns together; among them came the Ṛṣi Śunaśśepa. Based on the then current popular stories, the redactors introduced the name of Śunaśśepa also in the collection, as above explained. And the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa spun out a beautiful yarn and found use for the series of hymns collected in the maṇḍala. It cannot be explained, however, why and how the Śunaśśepa hymn in the Pavamāna maṇḍala (RV 9.3) escaped the notice of the AB in this connection. Needless to say that Soma was as much an object of praise in a sacrifice as the other gods.

II

SAṀHITĀS OTHER THAN THE ṚGVEDA

(1) The Taittirīya Saṁhitā has the following passage referring to Śunaśśepa story—

> Śúnaśśépam Ājīgartim Váruno'gṛhṇāt sá etā́m Vāruṇím apaśyat táyā vaí sá ātmā́nam Varuṇapāśā́d amuñcat Váruṇo vā́ etā́m gṛhṇāti yá ukhā́m pratimuñcáta úduttamā́m Varuṇa pā́śam asmā́d ítyāhātmā́nam evaítáyā /[23]

> "Varuṇa seized Śunaśśepa Ājīgarti, he saw this verse adressed to Varuṇa, by it he freed himself from the noose of Varuṇa; Varuṇa seizes him who takes the fire-pan, "From us the highest knot, O Varuṇa" he says, verily, thereby he frees himself from Varuṇa's noose."[24]

The Taittirīya context is the 'preparation of the ground for the Fire'. It can be seen how artificial is the connection of the Ṛgvedic mantra. 'Úduttamám' (RV 1.24.15) praying Varuṇa to loosen his pāśa at the top, middle and bottom. The outlook is entirely sacrificial. At any rate what is important for our study is the allusion to the bare fact that Śunaśśepa was seized by Varuṇa and when he praised him with this mantra "Úduttamám"[25] he was released from the fetters.

Kāṇva (82), Savya Āṅgirasa (72), Nodhā Gautama (74), Parāśara Śāktya (56), Gotama Rāhūgaṇa (204), Kutsa Āṅgirasa (212), Kakṣīvat (151), Parucchepa (100), Dīrghatamas (242) and Agastya (218). Just a few verses are not accounted as they occur in the Samvāda hymns. A single hymn of 8 verses is ascribed to Jetā Mādhuccandasa. The above details are given in order to show that after the family-maṇḍalas, the next step in the Ṛgveda-redaction was to bring together the the works of seers, next in importance. No definite principle can yet be discerned, underlying these "collected works."

23. TS 5.2.1.3 (Ānandāśrama edition).

24. Tr. Keith. The Veda of the Black Yajus School (HOS Vols. 18 and 19) 1914. The present reference is to Vol. 19 p. 401.

25. This verse has been borrowed from RV by all the other Saṁhitās, which fact emphasises the importance of God Varuṇa in men's conduct and outlook. Release from the chain of worldly existence or final emancipation is yet the highest pursuit of man according to our belief even today.

(2) The Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā—

......Uduttamam Varuṇa pāśam asmad iti Śunaśśepo vā etām Ājīgartir Varuṇagṛhīto'paśyat tayā vai sa Varuṇapāśād amucyata Varuṇapāśam evaitayā pramuñcate ... //[26]

This passage provides support for the version of the TS. Śunaśśepa, son of Ajīgarta, seized by Varuṇa saw the mantra "Uduttamam" etc. and thereby was freed from Varuṇa's noose, and Varuṇa's noose will loosen itself with this mantra.

(3) The Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha[27] alludes to the Śunaśśepa legend in exactly the same words as the above.

(4) The Atharva-Veda Saṁhitā does not record the Śunaśśepa story but has two hymns of which he is the Seer, *viz.* AV. 6.25 and 7.83.[28] The former according to Kauśika Sūtra accompanies a rite against a disease of the neck and shoulders (gaṇḍāmālā). The latter is a hymn to Varuṇa praying for relief from fetters. It is also held as a remedy against dropsy. The third verse of this hymn is the same as RV 1.24.15, the famous "Uduttamam."

III

BRĀHMAṆAS

(1) Śunaśśepa is immortalised in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.[29] It is mysterious, however, that neither the famous Vedic seer nor the story of his deliverance is ever referred to in any other Brāhamṇa.

To recapitulate the story as given in the AB : Hariścandra of the Ikṣvāku race, son of Vedhas, was childless. Once the sages Parvata and Nārada were his guests. The king asked[30] the latter with wonderment as to why all beings under the Sun, endowed with intelligence or no, alike long for a son, what is it exactly they gain etc. And Nārada came forth with his reply in ten gāthās, expatiating on the merits of begetting a son, *e.g.* "Food is life for man, clothing his protection, gold his beauty, cattle his strength. His wife is a friend, his daughter is a pity, but the son is his Light in the highest world."[31] Nārada further, advised Hariścandra to approach Varuṇa praying for a son whom he might again surrender to him in a sacrifice. Accordingly the king approached Varuṇa who granted his request.

26. KS 19.11 (Kāṭhaka-Saṁhitā ed. Satavalekar, Aundh)

27. Kap. S. 21,1 (Kapiṣṭhala-Kaṭha-Saṁhitā ed. Raghu Vīra, I.)

28. As a seer of hymns, Śunaśśepa appears in a few other Saṁhitās *e.g.* SV. Pūrvārcika 1.2.5,7 ; 1.3.8 ; 2.6.9,10 ; 2.7.9. VS 10.27-34, 11.14-16, 12.12, 18.45-53, 21.1,2 ; 35.11. These are but stray verses, most of which are repetitions of his Ṛgvedic composition. As they do not bear on the legend of Śunaśśepa, no further consideration would be necessary. The list of Vedic Ṛṣis is conveniently compiled by C. V. Vaidya in his History of Sanskrit Literature: Vedic Period (1930), pp. 200 and 207.

29. AB 7.13-18 (Ānandāśrama edition).

30. Yam nu imam putram icchanti ye vijānanti ye ca na /
kim svit putreṇa vindate tan ma ācakṣva Nārada // Ibid.7.13.

31. Annam ha prāṇaḥ śaraṇam ha vāso rūpam hiraṇyam paśavo vivāhāḥ / Sakhā ha jāyā kṛpaṇam ha duhitā jyotir ha putraḥ paraṁe vyoman // Ibid.

The son, Rohita, was born. But on the birth of the Light of his heart as much as of the worlds, the king was loth to give him up to the God. So he pleaded excuses and put off the dreadful event successively, for ten days of confinement, then when the teeth emerge, when they fall, emerge again, and finally when the boy grows into a youth fit to wear armour. Varuṇa persisted in his demand and Rohita, being apprised by the father of the old contract with the God, somehow did not submit but went away to the forest, bow in hand. For one full year he wandered. Meanwhile Varuṇa was wroth and seized Hariścandra, who, as a result began to suffer from dropsy. Rohita heard this and was coming back to town when Indra, in the guise of a man, came up and exhorted him to wander more and more. There is such good in moving about, not sitting idle, for " The fortune of a man who sits, sits also, it rises when he rises, it sleeps when he sleeps, it moves well when he moves. Wander! "[32] Or again, " He who wanders finds honey, he who wanders finds sweet figs (udumbaram); look at the pre-eminence of the Sun, who wandering, never[33] tires." Thus on the sixth round, Rohita met, in the forest, the sage Ajīgarta, son of Sūyavasa, seized by starvation.[34] He had three sons, Śunaḥpuccha Śunaśśepa and Śunolāṅgūla. Rohita said, " O sage, I will give a hundred, I will buy myself off with one of these (sons)." Then the father was unwilling to part with the eldest, and the mother with the youngest. Hence the middle one Śunaśśepa was sold. Rohita brought him to his father and told him his proposal. Hariścandra approached Varuṇa who readily agreed.

The sacrifice began, eminent priests officiating. Viśvāmitra as Hotṛ, Jamadagni as Adhvaryu, Ayāsya as Udāgtṛ and Vaśiṣṭha as Brahmā. The victim was due to be taken through various rites before the actual sacrifice, but the rites of niyojana (binding the paśu to the stake) and viśasana (cutting it up with knife) were too repulsive to the good Jamadagni (the Adhvaryu, on whom devolved all the manual labour of the Sacrifice), he refused. There came this Ajīgarta, again, willing to bind him to the stake for a hundred more ; and further to cut him up with knife for a third hundred cows. Inhumanity perhaps reached its zenith, difficult even for the gods to bear.[35] So, when the poor victim, Śunaśśepa, a human being after all, endowed with thinking, poured forth his fervent prayers to the gods in utter

32. Āste bhaga āsīnasya ūrdhvas tiṣṭhati tiṣṭhataḥ /
Śete nipadyamānasya carāti carato bhagaḥ caraiva // Ibid. 7.15.

33. Caran vai madhu vindati caran svādum udumbaram /
Sūryasya paśya śremāṇam yo na tandrayate caran // Ibid.

34. Here is a genuine difficulty. The text reads—" aśanayā parītam " how can it mean ' overcome with hunger ?' It were well to have anaśanayā (= anaśanena, fem. being Vedic). Keith evidently felt it ; and preferred the Śāṅkh ŚS reading ' aśanāyāparītam'. (Rig-Veda Brāhmaṇas Translated. HOS Vol. 25, 1920, p. 303 n. 9). Asanāyā (f) = hunger (Monier-Williams). But, pray, look at the other ghastly attribute, ' putram bhakṣamāṇam ' in the Śāṅkhāyana ! Perhaps that renders Rohita's offer to buy up the son a logical step.

35. VI says that at this stage Viśvāmitra's advice inspired Śunaśśepa to ask the gods to release him. So also Wilson in his resumé. This is not true to the Aitareya, wherein, Śunaśśepa, having been driven by necessity, simply ' ran ' to the gods—' amānuṣamiva vai mā viśasiṣyanti, hantāham devatā upadhāvāmīti'. Ref. VI, II, pp. 385–6, Wilson RV Tr. Vo Vol. I, p. 60 n. Viśvāmitra's advice to the effect is, no doubt, mentioned in later literature like the Rāmāyaṇa, which however provides justification for Śunaśśepa choosing to sit on the lap of Viśvāmitra (aṅkam āsasāda, see infra 38) amidst so many great men.

helplessness, they heard! Agni, the liaison deity, between gods and mortals, steered Śunaśśepa through; the catastrophe was averted. (Prajāpati), Agni, Savitṛ, Varuṇa, Viśvedevas, Indra, Aśvins and Uṣas—all these were propitiated with fulsome praise. Indra presented a golden chariot to Śunaśśepa. As the praise of Uṣas, in three verses, was being uttered, the bonds fell off one by one. Śunaśśepa was free. And Hariścandra was at the same time cured of the ailment.[36]

Then the high priests invited Śunaśśepa to perform the closing rite called the abhiṣecanīya. Śunaśśepa in this ceremony saw what is called the 'añjassava,'[37] a certain improved method of pressing the Soma. Naturally afterwards, he became the idol of admiration of all concerned. But what was his station in future? Forsaken by his parents, what home to seek for shelter? He straight away went and sat on the lap of Viśvāmitra, as a son sits on the father's.[38] When "all's well that end's well," Ajīgarata asked Viśvāmitra to give back his son. The latter refused on the ground that the gods gave Śunaśśepa to him. Thus he became Devarāta Vaiśvāmitra. Then Ajīgarta addressed his invitation to Śunaśśepa himself—"At least, you come, both of us (father and mother) invite you. Āṅgirasa you are by birth, son of Ajīgarta and reputed as poet. O sage, do not break away from the ancestral line. Do return to me." How courteous and complimentary! Śunaśśepa, however, sharply retorted: "They saw you, knife in hand, a thing which they did not find even among the Śūdras. And in lieu of me, you, O Aṅgiras, chose to have three hundred cows." "That is just what burns my heart, my dear," replied Ajīgrata, "I verily committed a sin. Let me make amends, all the three hundred cows will go to you." Śunaśśepa said again, "Once a man commits sin, he will surely commit another. You did not shun to behave like a Śūdra, and an inexpiable sin have you committed." Viśvāmitra supported this last statement, rapprochement was impossible.

Viśvāmitra renewed his invitation to Śunaśśepa to join him only: "You shall be the eldest of my sons. Your progeny will have priority. My divine heritage shall be yours, with that I invite you." Much too clever for an ancient tale: Śunaśśepa wanted his rank and status in the family to be clearly defined and accepted unequivocally by all the heirs concerned. Śunaśśepa in this context addressed Viśvāmitra as 'Rājaputra,' which, according to Sāyaṇa, raised an issue as to how a Brāhmaṇa by birth can change over to a Kṣatriya clan. But Viśvāmitra, "friend of all," was truly magnanimous. He had a hundred and one sons. He called them all promptly, and said "Listen to me Madhucchandas, Ṛṣabha, Reṇu, Aṣṭaka (and all), Are there any amoung you brothers who are not for Śunaśśepa's priority?"[39] Madhucchandas was midmost of the sons. The fifty brothers elder to

36. The pertinent RV references have been considered in the previous section.

37. Apart from the particular act of Soma-pressing, this expression is applied by Sāyaṇa to the final rite itself—So'yam añjassavaḥ iṣṭipaśusāṅkaryamantareṇa añjasā ṛjumārgeṇa anuṣṭhitatvāt/ Ibid. 7.17.

38. atha ha Śunaśśepo Viśvāmitrasyāṅkam āsasāda / Ibid.

39. atha ha Viśvāmitraḥ putrān āmantrayāmāsa Madhucchandāḥ śṛṇotana Ṛṣabho Reṇur Aṣṭakaḥ / Ye ke ca bhrātaraḥ stha nāsmai jyaiṣṭhyāya kalpadhvam iti // Ibid. 7.17.

him thought that the proposal was not in their interest, they were cursed by the angry father into low and barbarous life. The other fifty with Madhucchandas as leader[40] humbly submitted : whatever father proposes, we shall abide by, and turning to Śunaśśepa, gave him word also, saying ' we shall put you in front and shall remain behind you.' Viśvāmitra was much pleased, blessed them all heartily. Devarāta (Śunaśśepa) inherited a double share *viz.* the overlordship of the Jahnus and the divine lore.[41]

This is the Śunaśśepa legend which is prescribed to be narrated at a king's coronation. Seated on a golden seat, the Hotā narrates, seated also on a golden seat, the Adhvaryu responds ; and the king just after being anointed listens. The narrative ends with the dakṣiṇā : a thousand for the narrator, a hundred for him who responds ; the seats and a white mule chariot also to the Hotā. The phalaśruti declares one is absolved of all sin, and those who desire sons will get them by causing this story to be narrated.

> Sahasram ākhyātre dadyācchatam parigaritre ete caivāsane śvetaś cāśvatarīratho hotuḥ, putrakāmā hāpyākhyāpayeran labhante ha putrān labhante ha putrān // (AB 7.18).

The legend as narrated by the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa may now be briefly reviewed. The Ṛgvedic nucleus consists merely of Śunaśśepa's deliverance from the pāśa (fetters) by Varuṇa or may be by Agni, and eight hymns having a total of 107 verses (RV 1.24 to 30-97 verses, plus RV 9.3 having 10 = 107) have been ascribed to his seership. It is important that there is no allusion to the episode in the maṇḍalas of the Viśvāmitras or the Vasiṣṭhas, whereas an unconnected Ātreya, Ṛṣi Sadāpṛṇa, (RV 5.2.7) praises Agni for the great act. No wonder, the episode finds place in the Śatarcina maṇḍala, which constitutes, so to say, the "collected works " of the centurion seers. Most, if not all, legends of the Ṛgveda are concentrated in the first Maṇḍala. So when the hymns of the Ṛṣi Śunaśśepa were put together, possibly, the redactors of the Saṁhitā introduced the two verses bearing Śunaśśepa's name. It is clearly patchwork and the two verses, though occurring consecutively, betray a lack of logical sequence.

Between the age of the Ṛgveda and that of the Brāhmaṇa, the popular element had full sway evidently and quite a harmonious account has been presented in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa. The Śunaśśepa-event as the 'middle' part we have a beginning and an end tagged on. The Age represented the glorification of the Karmakāṇḍa, performance of sacrifices was the rule of the day. Varuṇa as the Lord of

40. Witness the fate of the midmost son, again ! Madhucchandas, is called upon to submit to family interests like Śunaśśepa himself.

41. Adhīyata Devarāto rikthayor ubhayor ṛṣiḥ / Jahnūnām cādhipatye daive vede ca Gāthinām // (AB 7.18). And to pursue the scholastic issue, it may be realised that the grant of the divine lore helped Śunaśśepa to transfer himself to the Kṣatriya family. But was it not a fact that the same divine lore, of which Viśvāmitra was already the proud possessor, had already elevated him to the rank and status of a Brāhmaṇa ? The whole contention is thoroughly unfounded as we shall prove in the next chapter that Viśvāmitra was a Ṛṣi par excellence and belonged to an age when there was no such distinction, when efficiency and wisdom alone raised a man to the pedestal.

Pāśa (Pāśī) was the most powerful god, more than his grace, which was not wanting, his wrath kept all people alert. Therefore the Saṁhitās reverberate with prayers to appease his anger. The pact between Hariścandra and Varuṇa to sacrifice even the son if he should be born, the natural disinclination to sacrifice the son—after he is born, man dodging god, the grown-up youth finding the wide world more inviting than heaven through the medium of the gallows, divine wrath, inevitable suffering and hunting for expiation, then a silver lining in the cloud—these are trends which are realistic and which have been logically worked into a fitting prologue.

Even so the epilogue. Śunaśśepa, by the grace of the gods, was reborn as it were, having been saved from the yūpa. To whom should he belong? What rank should he hold? Śunaśśepa himself elected to join Viśvāmitra, who, true to his name, was the 'friend of all', the champion of the distressed. Certain home touches give perfection to the denoument. Viśvāmitra had a hundred and one sons. Perhaps in the exuberance of his generous heart, the great sage conferred upon the god-given son all privileges of primogeniture. One's heart would melt with sympathy for that army of forsaken sons, a hundred and one, and specially the fifty recalcitrant ones that were cursed. But the sage who made and unmade things knew best.

Vajrād api kaṭhorāṇi mṛdūni kusumād api /
Lokottarāṇām cetāmsi ko hi vijñātum arhati //[42]

Inscrutable are the minds of the superior among men, harder than diamond, softer than flower!

Thus the Vedic outline of Śunaśśepa having been saved from Death by the grace of the gods has developed into an elaborate narrative which has come to embody so much of mundane matter like the longing of a childless man contrasted with the despair of a prolific parent with a hundred (and one) sons, half of them recalcitrant, contrasted, again, with the helplessness of an indigent parent who is prepared in lieu of a hundred kine to surrender a son to be sacrificed at the altar, poverty painfully exaggerated to the extent of even the names being ugly and unbecoming: Śunaśśepa, Śunaḥpuccha, Śunolāṅgūla, the age-long principle and process of changing over to a different family (adoption), withal, the joy of having a son, the Light of this and the other world, finally, the glorification of the sacrifice, the bounteous dakṣiṇā not excluded.

(2) The Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra repeats the legend as found in the AB, but for a few changes which are of no consequence. There are a number of verbal differences, such as are natural to dittography.

(*a*) According to AB Rohita finds Ajīgarta in the sixth year of wandering, in the Śrauta Sūtra, in the seventh year. The benefits of wandering recited everytime by the disguised Indra communicating new ideas are lacking here; it is almost

42. Bhavabhūti, Uttara-Rāmacarita, Act I.

a repetition of the verse of the sixth peregrination :

Caran vai madhu vindatyapacinvan parūṣakam /
Uttiṣṭhan vindate śriyam na niṣat kiñcanāvati //[43]

" Wandering he obtains honey, wandering the sweet berry, rising he obtains wealth, sitting nothing at all." Whereas, in the previous verse, the reference to the Sun's example gave a thrilling finish to the dictum of travel :

Caran vai madhu vindati caran svādum udumbaram /
Sūryasya paśya śremāṇam yo na tandrayate caran///[44]

" Wandering he obtains honey, wandering the sweet figs, witness the pre-eminence of the Sun who, wandering, never tires."

(b) Secondly, Ajīgarta is represented as eating the son when Rohita accosted him : So'jīgartam Sauyavasim ṛṣim aśanāyāparītam putram bhakṣamāṇam araṇyam upeyāya /[45] This should be regarded only as an instance of the moss which inevitably collects as the stream of tradition flows through different mouths.

(c) Thirdly, as soon as he was set free, Śunaśśepa sees the " añjassava " according to Śāṅkhāyana, whereas he does so in the Aitareya after a magnanimous invitation from the high priests :

tam ṛtvija ūcus tvameva no'syāhnas samsthām
adhigacchetyatha haitam Śunaśśepo'ñjassavam dadarśa //[46]

IV

VEDIC ANCILLARRIES

(1) The Nirukta

Yāska does not deal with the Śunaśśepa legend nor does he comment on any of the Śunaśśepa verses of the RV. There is however a reference[47] to his being sold for price, in illustration of the practice of selling boys and girls. Discussing the question of inheritance, it is said that both the son and daughter have a right to it. Manu also supported the view.[48] But some do not favour the daughter ;

43. Śāṅkh. ŚS. Hillebrandt's edition (Bibliotheca Indica) 1888. Vol. I, p. 191.
44. Already quoted n. 33 supra.
45. Śāṅkh ŚS. p. 191.
46. AB 7.18.
47. Nir. 3.4.
48. Aviśeṣéṇa putrāṇām dāyó bhavati dhármataḥ /
mithunānām visargādaú mánus Svāyambhuvó'bravīt //

Note—the quotation is not traced to its source. The śloka is accented in Sarup's edition (1927, text only). Bombay Venkatesvara Press edn. does not accent it, though Durga's commentary accents the pratīka thereof. BSS Edn. (Bhadkamkar) follows suit ; Ānandāśrama. The statement is, clearly, made by Manu, son of Svayambhū, at the beginning of creation (visargādau), whereas we are in the Age of Manu Vaivasvata ! Hence Yāska continues—

na duhitara ityeke / ' tasmāt pumān dāyādo'dāyādā strī ' / iti vijñāyate / ' tasmāt striyam jātām parāsyanti na pumāmsam / iti ca // Strīṇām dānavikrayātisargā vidyante na pumsaḥ / pumso'pītyeke / Śaunaśśepe darśanāt / abhrātṛmatīvāda ityaparam //

for she is cast off as soon as born, not the son. Moreover, with regard to women, they are given away, sold or abandoned; not so with regard to men. Here it is pointed out that these three actions relate to men also as in the case of Śunaśśepa (Śaunaśśepe darśanāt). The discussion concludes that a brotherless daughter has a claim for inheritance. The whole crux lies in the interpretation of RV 3.31.1, which is outside our purview.

Referring thus to the fact of Śunaśśepa being sold for price, Yāska adds support to the Aitareya version to that extent.

Commenting on the illustration provided by Śunaśśepa, Skanda and Maheśvara explain the giving away (dāna) in the words of the AB 'anena tvā yajā' (Hariścandra to Varuṇa), the bargain in Rohita's words to Hariścandra 'anena ātmānam niṣkrīṇā,' the abandonment also is told— 'atisargo'pi Viśvāmitreṇa kṛtaḥ śrūyate jyāyāṃso Madhucchandasaḥ, asamañjasaś ca Sagareṇa/ (jyāyāṃso ityasya sthāne jyāyaso iti pāṭha ucitaḥ/ Ed. Sarup).[49] We may somehow make it out that those who were elder to Madhucchandas were abandoned by Viśvāmitra. But the celebrated commentator Durgācārya says in the same context: tathā ca parityāgo'pi dṛṣṭah yathā Viśvāmitreṇa Madhucchanda ādīnām/[50] Evidently, Durga is led by the version of the Rāmāyaṇa, according to which the sons of Viśvāmitra became as recalcitrant as the command itself was ruinous, the command being that all of them should offer themselves as victims at Ambarīṣa's sacrifice for the sake of Śunaśśepa. They were cursed and abandoned.[51]

Under Nirukta II 13 relating to the synonyms of the sun and the sky, Yāska says—

Athāpi Varuṇasyaikasya / 'áthā vayám Āditya vraté tavá'. This is the third line of the famous Varuṇa prayer "Uduttamam" (RV 1.24.15) already considered in the previous pages. Both commentators Skanda-Maheśvara (joint authors) and Durga explain the full text of the verse referring to the fact of Śunaśśepa pronouncing it at the sacrifice. Skanda-Maheśvara, however, add an alternative comment on behalf of the etymologists (nairuktapakṣe tu), which purports to the philosophic implications of the stanza.[52] It implores Varuṇa to liberate one from the bonds of sin committed in the three stages of life, boyhood, manhood and oldage. This is significant if it is supported by tradition, without depending upon mere fancy, for the AB has put the mantra into the mouth of the victim Śunaśśepa.

49. Skandaswāmin and Maheśvara on the Nirukta Ed. L. Sarup Vol. II (1931), p. 128, also fn. 16 on the same page.

50. Bombay Venkatesvara Press Edn. p. 180 (1912).
Sarup's, quoted above, p. 84 'Śunaśśepo yūpe baddho Varuṇam āha,' whereas Durga: 'anayā triṣṭubhā upākṛtaś Śunaśśepo Varuṇam stutavān,' which is incorrect according to AB. Skanda is accurate.

51. *cf.* Keith's remarks: RV Br. Tr. (HOS. 25) p. 64 f. and p. 307. Rāmāyaṇa 1.62.10,11.

52. Ibid. Sarup, p. 84.

(2) The Bṛhaddevatā

The Bṛhaddevatā does not contribute much to the historical study of the legend. Thrice, in different contexts, the name of Śunaśśepa occurs in the text, twice in the introductory portion and once while describing the gods of the Ṛgveda (1.24-30).

(*a*) Namaskāraś Śunaśśepe namaste astu Vidyute /
(Saṅkalpayannidam tulyo'ham syāmiti yaducyete) // BD 1.54.

The author is illustrating several technical expressions[53] like stuti, praśamsā, nindā, samśaya etc. and among them namaskāra and saṅkalpa. These latter are defined and examples given in this stanza. Namaskāra or homage is illustrated in the Śunaśśepa formula *i.e.* 1.27.13.

Námo mahádbhyo námo arbhakébhyo
námo yúvabhyo náma āśinébhyaḥ /
yájāma devā́n yádi śaknávāma
mā jyayāsaś śámsamā́ vṛkṣi devā́ḥ //[54]

(*b*) The second reference is in connection with the order of words, which should be understood according to sense :

Śunaśśepam narāśamsam dyāvā naḥ pṛthivīti ca /
Niraskṛteti prabhṛtiṣvarthādāsīt kramo yathā //[55]

In the Saṁhitā sometimes these words are used differently *e.g.* Śunaś cicchepam (5.2.7), narā vā śaṁsam (10.64.3), dyāvā naḥ pṛthivīti ca (2.41.20) should be read as Śunaśśepam cit, dyāvā-pṛthivī naḥ, etc. The proper order of words in such cases should be determined by the sense conveyed by the context.

(*c*) When enumerating the deities of the Śunaśśepa hymns so-called, BD says—

Stūyamānaś śaśvad iti prītas tu manasā dadau/
Śunaśśepāya divyam tu ratham sarvam hiraṇmayam // BD 3.103.

" Being praised with the stanza ' Śáśvad Índraḥ ' (RV 1.30.16), Indra, pleased at heart, bestowed upon Śunaśśepa a celestial chariot all made of gold."

Here probably Śunaśśepa the Seer is meant and not the poor victim of Hariś-candra's sacrifice. Yāska does not give more details of the legend except the slender thread pointing to Śunaśśepa's being sold for price.

Śaunaka, author of the Bṛhaddevatā, follows his example and refers only to Indra's gift of the golden chariot to Śunaśśepa, which need not necessarily be on

53. BD 1.33-40.

54. A very popular mantra used on all occasions of addressing an assembly at domestic functions. Śunaśśepa, bound to the stakes, is believed to address the Viśvedevas with this stanza (AB).

55. BD 2.115.

the occasion of his life's ordeal.[56] If the incident really belonged to the famous sacrifice, Indra, who was manasā prītaḥ, should have ordered his release at once. It is not advisable to hypothesize, but, may it be that Yāska and Śaunaka, both of them accredited exponents of the Veda, did not much regard the colourful tapestry of the Aitareya? After all, the legend was the outcome of the Yājñika School; the Nairuktas had their own opinions in the matter.

(3) The Sarvānukramaṇī of Kātyāyana

This work affords good support to the Aitareya version. Śunaśśepa is here described as the son of Ajīgarta and the adopted son of Viśvāmitra, being given by the gods, ājīgartiḥ Śunaśśepaḥ sa kṛtrimo Vaiśvāmitro devarātaḥ.[57] Hariścandra's concern in the affair is dubious. Kātyāyana, while indexing RV 1.28, says: Yatra grāvā nava ṣaḷanuṣṭubādi yaccidhy aulūkhalyau pare mausalyau ca prajāpater Hariścandrasyāntyā carmapraśaṁsā vā/[58] The idea is that the last verse is of Hariścandra *i.e.* he is the deity thereof. The BD has Soma instead.[59] But Devatānukramaṇī states that the last verse praises Prajāpati Hariścandra or the carma: 'Prajāpatim Hariścandram carma vāntyā praśaṁsati.'[60] AB however contemplates it to be a praise of Soma. Who is this Hariścandra? Considering the meaning of the verse,

> Take out the remaining Soma-juice from the tray, pour it on the strainer and collect the same in the cow's hide.[61]

it is difficult to see which Hariścandra is to be connected with it. Lacking in relevancy, it matters little whether it is Hariścandra the sacrificing king or Prajāpati himself with the name Hariścandra. The verse is in the form of instruction from one priest to another priest or an assistant; and it seems perfectly natural for Śunaśśepa to say it after he had pressed the Soma in a novel but quick process (añjassava). According to the accepted principle 'liṅgoktadevatā,' Soma must be the deity. Whatever it is, it should be noted that so far as the development of the story is concerned, the Sarvānukramaṇī has yielded to the Hariścandra complex and admitted him into the legend's orbit.

(4) Vāsiṣṭha Dharmaśāstra

This work[62] which is stated to be one of the four most ancient works on Hindu Law includes Śunaśśepa among the various kinds of sons. They are classified

56. This observation is happily supported by Ṣaḍguruśiṣya. Ref. Sarvā. P. 85 v. 14, please see infra n. 69.

57. Macdonell, Sarvā pp. 6-7.

58. Ibid.

59. BD 3.101 and M's notes.

60. Quotation by Ṣaḍguruśiṣya. Sarvā p.87, *cf.* commentator's remarks.

61. RV 1.28.9. Ūcchiṣṭám camvor bhara sómam pavítra ā́ sṛja / Nídhehi górádhi tvací /

62. Ed. A. A. Führer, Bombay Sanskrit Series XXIII (1930) p. 50 Mm. P. V. Kane assigns the work tentatively to a period between 300 and 100 B.C. He opines further that it is later than Gautama, Āpastamba and Baudhāyana. See History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol. I, BORI, 1930, p.59.

into twelve,[63] six of whom are entitled to inheritance and the other six not entitled. Among the latter category, Śunaśśepa is mentioned as an instance of two kinds *viz.* krīta and svayamupāgata : a son who is bought for price and 'a son who approaches by himself'.

" athādāyādabandhūnām sahoḍha eva prathamaḥ / yā garbhiṇī samskriyate sahoḍhaḥ putro bhavati / dattako dvitīyaḥ / yam mātāpitarau dadyātām / krītas tṛtīyaḥ / tacchunaśśepena vyākhyātam / svayamupāgataś caturthaḥ / tacchunaśśepena vyākhyātam /

Śunaśśepo vai yūpe niyukto devatās tuṣṭāva / tasyeha devatāḥ pāśam mumucus tam ṛtvija ūcuḥ / mamaivāyam putro'stviti tān ha na sampade / te sampādayāmāsuḥ / eṣa eva yam kāmayet tasya putro'stviti / tasya ha Viśvāmitro hotāsīt tasya putratvam īyāyā //

According to AB, as soon as the añjaśsava is over, Śunaśśepa himself goes and sits on the lap of Viśvāmitra as son. There is no reference to the discussion among the ṛtviks themselves to have him as son each for himself, though Sāyaṇa amplifies the situation with this explanation. When Ajīgarta began to press his son to come back, Viśvāmitra of course invites him to join his family only. It is not incorrect to call Śunaśśepa as a svayamūpāgata son. Though Vasiṣṭha's Law did not entitle the son for any inheritance, he being an adāyādabandhu, Viśvāmitra out of sweet will and special favour conferred upon Śunaśśepa his entire property, earthly and divine. Was not Vasiṣṭha, the author of this code, a friend of Viśvāmitra ? We shall deal with this problem in the next chapter.

V

LATER EXPONENTS OF THE VEDA

(1) Ṣaḍguruśiṣya

Ṣaḍguruśiṣya who wrote and finished his commentary on Kātyāyana's Sarvānukramaṇī in 1187 A.D.[64] closely follows the Aitareya version of the Legend. Inspired with its workmanship, Ṣāḍguruśiṣya all at once got into a poetical vein and narrated the story in the form of verse ;[65] it is a small canto of 22 stanzas. A few minor differences are inevitable in the relay. Seeing Ajīgrata desirous of killing him, Śunaśśepa addressed him ' wait, I shall hasten to the gods (for protection) '—

Yūpe baddhaḥ Śunaśśepo jighāmsum pitaram tataḥ /
ūce tiṣṭhāham evānyā upadhāvāmi devatāḥ //[66]

In the Aitareya, Śunaśśepa never addresses him. He saw him coming with the knife and, in consternation that they would actually cut him up, soliloquises

63. Dvādaśa ityeva putrāh purāṇadṛṣṭāḥ / They are svayamutpādita, kṣetraja, putrikā paunarbhava, kānīna, gūḍhotpanna, sahoḍha, dattaka, krīta, svayamupāgata, apaviddha, and śūdrāputra. Ibid. pp. 49-50.

64. Macdonell's preface to Sarvā p. v.

65. Ibid. p. xx.

66. Sarvā, p. 85 verse 12.

'hantāham devatā upadhāvāmi '[67] —alas, I shall hasten to the gods. Ajīgrata must have looked a veritable fiend and it is not unnatural that Śunaśśepa must have at once screamed 'stop'!

Another departure, which is an improvement on the original is that he prayed, in the course of his appeal to the gods, to Indra, as well, who had already become his patron by bestowing a golden chariot upon him, well pleased with his praise—

Indram ca pūrvavyāpārasamprāptastutisupriyam /
Hiraṇmayarathasyāpi svasmai dātāram eva ca///[68]

This makes it clear that the gift of the golden chariot was an earlier event. An apparent incongruity is removed by this view, because when Śunaśśepa was begging for his life the giving of a chariot—may be of gold—is but a travesty of his exalted position. This we have pointed out in the last section.[69] Secondly, it reveals that Śunaśśepa was himself a Ṛṣi and a favourite singer, a fact which lends support to the hypothesis that all the series of 7 hymns attributed to him were irrelevant for the occasion and that it was the handiwork of the Aitareya to weave them all into a web to suit its own purpose.

(2) Sāyaṇa

Though so much was written by Sāyaṇa in the shape of commentary to the hymns of the Veda, as well as to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, he has not said anything which would contribute to the historical study of the legend. In the RV, rather contrary to his wont, he does not even narrate the story in this own words. He adheres to the task of quoting his authorities, chief of whom is Kātyāyana, while introducing every sūkta and also specific verses when necessary. In this case, he quotes from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also, a work on which he wrote his own commentary. When the authorities differed from one another, he faithfully reproduces all of them : *e.g.* the discussion[70] about the devatā of RV 1.28.9, wherein he quotes all the sources.

"ucchiṣṭam ityasyāḥ Hariścandrādhiṣavaṇacarmasomānām anyatamo devatā."

It may be remembered that the Bṛhaddevatā provided the alternative between adhiṣavaṇacarma and soma ; whereas the Sarvānukramaṇī following the Devatānukramaṇī considered Hariścandra as the deity. The best thing for Sāyaṇa was of course to record all the evidence and leave it at that which he has done.

(3) Dyā Dviveda

Dyā Dviveda's Nītimañjarī (written 1494 A.D.) is only a replica of the picture given by the older authors, in this case, Kātyāyana, Ṣaḍguruśiṣya and Sāyaṇa.

67. AB 7.16.
68. Sarvā, p. 85 verse 14.
69. Supra n. 56.
70. Supra p.

From the first-mentioned authority the author quotes the index ; from the second, the poetical narrative, and from the third the explanation of the Ṛgvedic mantras.[71]

The main purpose of Dyā is however to illustrate certain ethical maxims from the Vedic events. It was elsewhere observed that our author has not performed well in that respect. His dicta are unimpressive and his examples open to question. Śunaśśepa provides the ground for this observation : Pitarau vandyau ityāha—

Pitarau hi sadā vandyau na tyajed aparādhinau /
Pitrā baddhaḥ Śunaśśepo yayāce pitṛdarśanam //[72]

' Parents always deserve respect ; they should not be forsaken though guilty. Bound by the very father, Śunaśśepa begged for a sight of the father (parents).'

The Ṛgevedic verse quoted in support is the famous ' kaśya nūnám ' (I.24.1) which ends with ' pitáram ca dṛśéyam mātáram ca,' which is the refrain of the next verse also. Enough has been said above to show at once that such moralisations do not at all appeal. In the present case, the interpretation of the last line of the Ṛgvedic verse just quoted, as conceived by Dyā is far from convincing. In fact, it is wrong ; Śunaśśepa could not and did not wish to see once again the parents who gave him birth. He was longing, on the other hand, to find on this earth, real affectionate parents. He found them, indeed, in Viśvāmitra.

Another lesson. Devānām api stutiḥ priyetyāha—

Aiśvaryaparipūrṇo'pi dadyāt stutyāpi cepsitam /
Śunaśśepāya sauvarṇam ratham Indraḥ stuto dadau //[73]

' A man endowed with riches, being praised, should give what is desired ; Indra, being praised, gave a golden chariot to Śunaśśepa '.

The moral, unfortunately, is not couched in clear terms. The versification reminds one of the proverbial versifiers of Bhoja's Court.[74] Suffice it to say, that both the lesson and the example lack the pithiness or the ' sting', which is the very soul of an epigram.

Before concluding this section, it must be observed, with a sense of surprise also that these veteran writers have not been drawn away by the Epic and Purāṇic versions of the legend. Their business was however specific, that is only to explain a given text. It is perfectly tactful and necessary for the commentator to confine himself to his province. But how could the great epics, specially the Rāmāyaṇa (which gives a different version of the story), and the Purāṇas like the Bhāgavata withhold their influence on these learned savants ? They were able to visualise a discipline which was more than fifteen centuries old in their time. The Epics

71. He has mentioned other authorities as well *viz.* Āśvalāyana ŚS., the Ṛg-vidhāna etc. They are commonplace.

72. Nītimañjarī (Benares Edition) p. 20. v. 11.

73. Ibid. p. 24 V. 12. The Ṛgvedic verse in support is 1.30.16.

74. Bhojanam dehi rājendra ghṛtasūpasamanvitam / (Kālidāsa concluded the labours of these born poets !) Māhiṣam ca śaraccandracandrikādhavalam dadhi //.

and Purāṇas surely belonged to later periods, perhaps the early centuries of the Christian era. And seeing the other end of knowledge which was fourteen-fold (caturdaśa vidyāḥ) was every man's goal in those times. The matter deserves some thought.

VI

RĀMĀYAṆA

The Rāmāyaṇa[75] records the Śunaśśepa legend in a very different form. The story is related by the sage Śatānanda, son of Gautama, to Śrī Rāma at a sacrifice which king Janaka was clebrating at Mithilā and to which Viśvāmitra took Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa to witness the great occasion. The guests were accorded a most respectful welcome by the King. After exchanging courtesies, Janaka's principal priest Śatānanda was pleased to hear of Rāma's visit to the hermitage of his revered father Gautama and of the redemption of the mother, Ahalyā who was under a curse. This happy event was due to the favour of Viśvāmitra who brought Rāma along. Naturally Śatānanda was overwhelmed with affection and regard for the young prince and a sense of gratitude to Viśvāmitra, the universal friend. This prompted him to recount all the great deeds of Viśvāmitra before the Prince, who listened with wonder and admiration. Śunaśśepa's deliverance was one of the series.

Once upon a time Viśvāmitra was practising severe penance at the Puṣkara in the western regions of our country. At the same time king Ambarīṣa of Ayodhyā started a sacrifice. The victim (paśu) was carried away by Indra, causing a serious breach in the performance. The priest accused the king of carelessness and, in atonement, proposed that either the stolen victim should be recovered or a human victim secured instead. The king made an elaborate search all over the country, towns and forests and even the holy hermitages. He was prepared to buy a human being paying a huge ransom, if such should be available. At length on the heights of the Bhṛgu mountain, he met the great sage Ṛcīka seated with his wife and sons. He applied to him for one of his sons in lieu of a hundred thousand kine. The father said he was unwilling to part with the eldest son and the mother declined to let go the youngest, her darling Śunaka. Thereupon, Śunaśśepa, the middle one, himself said 'Father says the eldest is not for sale, and mother says the youngest is not for sale; the middle one is meant for sale, I think. So, Prince, take me'. Ambarīṣa was delighted, gave away crores of gold and heaps of precious stones, along with a hundred thousand kine, and went away with Śunaśśepa mounted on his chariot.[76]

75. Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki. Edition--Nirṇayasāgara Press, Bombay, with Commentary Tilaka (1930).

76. Here ends canto 61, from which relevant portions are quoted hereunder :

> Etasminneva kāle tu Ayodhyādhipatir mahān
> Ambarīṣa iti khyāto yaṣṭum samupacakrame / 5
> Tasya vai yajamānasya paśum Indro jahāra ha
> Praṇaṣṭe tu paśau vipro rājānam idam abravīt / 6

At noon, the party halted at the Puṣkara for rest. There Śunaśśepa saw his maternal uncle Viśvāmitra engaged in penance, along with other sages. With sorrowful face, thirsty and exhausted, he fell at the sage's feet and appealed for succour in pathetic terms. Consoling him in so many words, the great sage Viśvāmitra, an ocean of kindness, commanded his sons to offer themselves as victims at king Ambarīṣa's sacrifice instead of Śunaśśepa. Then the sons, Madhucchandas and others retorted " How do you forsake, O Sire, your own sons to save another man's son ? We think it is improper like dog's flesh in the dish." Furious at this disobedient reply, Viśvāmitra cursed the sons for a thousand years of life on earth eating dog's flesh like the sons of Vasiṣṭha. Turning round to the pitiful Śunaśśepa, he instructed him " When you are bound to the holy yūpa by means of thread after being decked with red garlands and unguents, just address Agni and sing two songs (gāthās). You will succeed." He taught him the gāthās. Śunaśśepa having learnt them with due attention went pleased and urged Ambarīṣa to resume the journey. So they reached the capital. With the consent of the

Paśur abhyāhṛto rājan praṇaṣṭas tava durnayāt
Arakṣitāram rājānam ghnanti doṣā nareśvara / 7

Prāyaścittam mahaddhyetan naram vā puruṣarṣabha
Ānayasva paśum śīghram yāvat karma pravartate / 8

Upādhyāyavacaś śrutvā sa rājā puruṣarṣabhaḥ
Anviyeṣa mahābuddhiḥ paśum gobhis sahasraśaḥ / 9

Deśān janapadāms tāms tān nagarāṇi vanāni ca
Āśramāṇi ca puṇyāni mārgamāṇo mahīpatiḥ / 10

Sa putrasahitam tāta sabhāryam Raghunandana
Bhṛgutuṅge samāsīnam Ṛcīkam sandadarśa ha / 11

Tam uvāca mahātejāḥ praṇamyābhiprasādya ca
Maharṣim tapasā dīptam rājarṣir amitaprabhaḥ / 12

Pṛṣṭvā sarvatra kuśalam Ṛcīkam tam idam vacaḥ
Gavām śatasahasreṇa vikrīṇīṣe sutam yadi / 13

Paśor arthe mahābhāga kṛtakṛtyo'smi Bhārgava
Sarve parigatā deśā yajñiyam na labhe paśum / 14

Dātum arhasi mūlyena sutam ekam ito mama
Evam ukto mahātejā Ṛcīkas tvabravīd vacaḥ / 15

Nāham jyeṣṭham naraśreṣṭha vikrīṇīyām kathañcana
Ricīkasya vacaś śrutvā teṣām mātā mahātmanām / 16

Uvāca naraśārdūlam Ambarīṣam idam vacaḥ
Avikreyam sutam jyeṣṭham bhagavān āha bhārgavaḥ / 17

Mamāpi dayitam viddhi kaniṣṭham Śunakam prabho
Tasmāt kanīyasam putram na dāsye tava pārthiva / 18

Prāyeṇa hi naraśreṣṭha jyeṣṭhāḥ pitṛṣu vallabhāḥ
Mātṛṇām ca kanīyāmsas tasmād rakṣye kanīyasam / 19

Uktavākye munau tasmin munipatnyām tathaiva ca
Śunaśśepas svayam Rāma madhyamo vākyam abravīt / 20

Pitā jyeṣṭham avikreyam mātā cāha kanīyasam
Vikreyam madhyamam manye rājaputra nayasva mām / 21

Atha rājā mahābāhur vākyānte brahmavādinaḥ
Hiraṇyasya suvarṇasya koṭibhī ratnarāśibhiḥ / 22

Gavām śatasahasreṇa Śunaśśepam nareśvaraḥ
Gṛhītvā paramaprīto jagāma Raghunandana / 23

Ambarīṣas tu rājarṣī ratham āropya satvaraḥ
Śunaśśepam mahātejā jagāmāśu mahāyaśāḥ / 24

members of the sacrificial Sadas, the victim was purified, adorned with red cloth and tied to the post. Thus bound, Śunaśśepa praised in exquisite terms the two gods Indra and his brother (Viṣṇu) as already instructed. The thousand-eyed one was pleased with this intimate appeal and granted him long life. The sacrifice was duly concluded and king Ambarīṣa derived manifold benefit by the grace of Indra. And Viśvāmitra continued his penance at the Puṣkara for ten hundred years.

Thus we see that the Rāmāyaṇa appears to represent a tradition which differs much from the Aitareya. Whereas in the latter, king Hariścandra, on account of his son Rohita, tried to sacrifice in order to appease Varuṇa's anger, Śunaśśepa son of Ajīgarta, here in the Rāmāyaṇa king Ambarīṣa, on account of the sacrificial victim being stolen by Indra, tries to sacrifice, in general propitiation of the gods, Śunaśśepa, son of Ṛcīka. In the one, Viśvāmitra is not related to Śunaśśepa and

Canto 62

Śunaśśepam naraśreṣṭha gṛhītvā tu mahāyaśāḥ
Vyaśramat Puṣkare rājā madhyāhne Raghunandana / 1

Tasya viśramamāṇasya Śunaśśepo mahāyaśāḥ
Puṣkaram jyeṣṭham āgamya Viśvāmitram dadarśa ha / 2

Tapyantam ṛṣibhis sārdham mātulam paramāturaḥ
Viṣaṇṇavadano dīnas tṛṣṇayā ca śramena ca / 3

Papātāṅke mune Rāma vākyam cedam uvāca ha
Na me'sti mātā na pitā jñatayo bāndhavāḥ kutaḥ / 4

Trātum arhasi mām saumya dharmena munipuṅgava
Trātā tvam hi naraśreṣṭha sarveṣām tvam hi bhāvanaḥ / 5

Rājā ca kṛtakāryas syād aham dīrghāyur avyayaḥ
Svargalokam upāśnīyām tapas taptvā hyanuttamam / 6

Sa me nātho hyanāthasya bhava bhavyena cetasā
Piteva putram dharmātman trātum arhasi kilbiṣāt / 7

Tasya tadvacanam śrutvā Viśvāmitro mahātapāḥ
Sāntvayitvā bahuvidham putrān idam uvāca ha / 8

Yatkṛte pitaraḥ putrān janayanti śubhārthinaḥ
Paralokahitārthāya tasya kāloyam āgataḥ / 9

Ayam munisuto bālo mattaḥ śaraṇam icchati
Asya jīvitamātreṇa priyam kuruta putrakāḥ / 10

Sarve sukṛtakarmāṇaḥ sarve dharmaparāyaṇāḥ
Paśubhūtā narendrasya tṛptim agneḥ prayacchata / 11

Nāthavāṁś ca Śunaśśepo yajñaś cāvighnato bhavet
Devatās tarpitāś ca syur mama cāpi kṛtam vacaḥ / 12

Munes tad vacanam śrutvā Madhucchandādayas sutāḥ
Sābhimānam naraśreṣṭha salīlam idam abruvan / 13

Katham ātmasutān hitvā trāyase'nyasutam vibho
Akāryam iva paśyāmaḥ śvamāmsam iva bhojane / 14

Teṣām tad vacanam śrutvā putrāṇām munipuṅgavaḥ
Krodhasamraktanayano vyāhartum upacakrame / 15

Nissādhvasam idam proktam dharmādapi vigarhitam
Atikramya tu madvākyam dāruṇam romaharṣaṇam / 16

Śvamāmsabhojinas sarve Vāsiṣṭhā iva jātiṣu
Pūrṇam varṣasahasram tu pṛthivyām anuvatsyatha / 17

Kṛtvā śāpasamāyuktān putrān munivaras tadā
Śunaśśepam uvācārtam kṛtvā rakṣām nirāmayām / 18

comes on the scene only at the sacrifice as one of the officiating priests: in the other, Viśvāmitra is the maternal uncle of Śunaśśepa and enters the story even before the sacrifice but does not attend it; he also teaches him two gāthās whose recitation at the proper time will prevent his death. The revolt and degradation of the sons also precede the sacrifice in the Rāmāyaṇa, while the same occurred after in the Aitareya. Of 101 sons, 51 of whom Madhucchandas was leader, obeyed the father's command to accept Śunaśśepa's primogeniture. But in the Rāmāyaṇa all the sons,[77] even the good Madhucchandas were concerned in the revolt and its consequences; and what was the command which was disobeyed? It was that in order to save one soul *i.e.* Śunaśśepa's, all the sons should offer themselves as victims at the sacrifice. Ajīgarta sold Śunaśśepa, as he was driven to the pitch by his indigence, but Ṛcīka seems to have had enough and to spare, he must have made up his mind to spare a son also out of deference to the wishes of the great king who came to the door for help. The Aitareya depicts Śunaśśepa as the god-given son of Viśvāmitra, who adopted him into his family, formally also giving him the privileges of the first born. We saw how this fitted into the Vedic tradition in a wider application of the term. The Rāmāyaṇa provides no indication of what happened to Śunaśśepa afterwards. Perhaps he went to penance as he expressed himself when he sought Viśvāmitra's help (I.62.6).

This section cannot be concluded without referring to some far-reaching differences in reading—and therefore, in import—between the Bombay edition of the Rāmāyaṇa and that brought out by the Italian scholar G. Gorresio in 1843-67 (Bengal Recension).

Pavitrapāśair ābaddho raktamālyānulepanaḥ
Vaiṣṇavam yūpam āsādya vāgbhir agnim udāhara / 19

Ime ca gāthe dve divye gāyethā muniputraka
Ambarīṣasya yajñe'smin tatas siddhim avāpsyasi / 20

Śunaśśepo gṛhītvā te dve gāthe susamāhitaḥ
Tvarayā rājasimham tam Ambarīṣam uvāca ha / 21

Rājasimha mahābuddhe śīghram gacchāvahe vayam
Nivartayasva rājendra dīkṣām ca samudāhara / 22

Tadvākyam ṛṣiputrasya śrutvā harṣasamanvitaḥ
Jagāma nṛpatiś śīghram yajñavāṭam atandritaḥ / 23

Sadasyānumate rājā pavitrakṛtalakṣaṇam
Paśum raktāmbaram kṛtvā yūpe tam samabandhayat / 24

Sa baddho vāgbhir agryābhir abhituṣṭāva vai surau
Indram Indrānujam caiva yathāvan muniputrakaḥ / 25

Tataḥ prītas Sahasrākṣo rahasyastutitoṣitaḥ
Dīrgham āyus tadā prādāt Śunaśśepāya vāsavaḥ / 26

Sa ca rājā naraśreṣṭha yajñasya ca samāptavān
Phalam bahuguṇam Rāma sahasrākṣaprasādajam / 27

Viśvāmitro'pi dharmātmā bhūyas tepe mahātapāḥ
Puṣkareṣu naraśreṣṭha daśavarṣaśatāni ca / 28

77. Compare Keith's remarks on p. 64 of his Rig-Veda Brāhmaṇas Translated (HOS Vol. 25, 1920). He says if the gāthās introduced by the AB are taken by themselves there is no question of division among the sons. The division into first fifty as one group and the second fifty with the midmost Madhucchandas as leader of the other group is, in his opinion, perhaps, the handiwork of the Aitareya. There is some sense in this, at any rate, because Madhucchandas of Ṛgvedic fame is exonerated.

(*a*) It is said that Ambarīṣa was out to perform a human sacrifice and Indra carried away the victim :

" Tasya vai yajamānasya *naramedhena* bhūpateḥ
Prokṣitam mantravad yūpāt paśum Indro jahāra tam / "
1.63.6[78]

The Bombay edition does not specify which paśu it was, but the priest says 'Search for the stolen paśu or bring a human victim instead'. (See Com. Tilaka on this portion).[79]

(*b*) Ambarīṣa finds Ṛcīka with his many sons, residing in a homestead, but poor :

" Anveṣamāṇas so'paśyat Ṛcīkam nāma Rāghava
Bahuputram daridram ca dvijam gṛhanivāsinam " /
Ibid. 12.

But our Ṛcika is a maharṣi, dazzling with penance, accompanied by wife and sons on the heights of the Bhṛgu mountain (1.61.11,12 text quoted above in a footnote).

(*c*) The revolt of the sons is expressed in different terms :

" Katham ātmasutān hitvā trātā parasutān asi
Bhagavan kāryametat te svamāṃsasyeva bhakṣaṇam " /
1.64.14

The difference is only between sva-māṃsa and śva-māṃsa ! It is just possible that śva-māṃsa 'dog's flesh' is meant, not 'own (sva) flesh'. The confusion between s and ś in Bengali pronunciation is understandable. *Cf.* śāntvayitvā for sāntvayitvā. The Vāsiṣṭhas were cursed to eat dog's flesh. There also Gorresio reads as svamāṃsa.[80] The degradation was, from Vedic times, attached to eating dog's flesh. The great sage Vāmadeva famished by hunger cooked the entrails of a dog.[81] It is common parlance to call a shabby fellow as śvapaca. In the Purāṇas we meet with references which say that in times of famine the condition of some of these sages was so straitened that the whole family subsisted on dog's flesh :[82] The matter did not call for such discussion had not the alternative been most tragic and verily, unthinkable—eating one's own flesh and yet living ! [83]

78. The two cantos here are 63 and 64, whereas in the Bombay Edition, they are 61 and 62. Verbal differences in reading are numerous, but only those that indicate a factual change have been considered. The first kāṇḍa is called Ādikāṇḍa whereas we are familiar with the name Bālakāṇḍa. Gorresio spells Śunaśśepa with a *pha*.

79 Abhyāhṛta idānīm asmābhir ānītaḥ paśus tava durnayāt tvatpāpavaśāt tāvakarakṣiṇām pramādāt ca praṇaṣṭa ityanvayaḥ / Tilaka com. on Rāmāyaṇa 1.61.7 (Bombay).

80. Gorresio 1.61.20, 64.16-17.

81. RV 4.18.13.

82. *cf.* Mbh. Śānti. 5330 ff. quoted by Muir OST I p. 375 f.

83. But compare Rām 7.77-78 (Bombay, 1930) about the god (Śveta) who was cursed to eat his own flesh.

(*d*) Viśvāmitra imparts to Śunaśśepa a mantra, praising Indra, which he should mutter when sprinkled with holy water, before the actual sacrifice :

" Yadā paśutve putra tvam proksitaḥ syās tadā japeḥ
Imam mantram mayā proktam Indrābhiṣṭavasamyutam " /
Ibid. 19.

Later,

Sa baddha ṛgbhis tuṣṭāva devendram harivāhanam
Bhāgārthinam anuprāptam svareṇoccair vinādayan /
Ibid. 25.

Śunaśśepa praised Indra with verses from the Ṛgveda. According to our text, Viśvāmitra provided rakṣā first *i.e.* by chanting some spells and then taught him two gāthās. The instruction was, also, that he should first address himself to Agni, which fact peculiarly corresponds with the Vedic version. First he ran to Prajāpati (ka) and then to Agni, later on to Indra.[83A] Varuṇa the real god concerned is neglected by either version. Some scholars[84] attach much importance that, according to Gorresio, Viśvāmitra taught Śunaśśepa only *one* mantra, whereas in the Bombay book it is *two* gāthās. It is not necessarily one stanza only, because, later in the same text, the reference is amplified as ' ṛgbhis tuṣṭāva ' *i.e.* praised with several verses from the Ṛgveda. The same may apply to the two gāthās. Let us remember that the AB puts 97 verses into the victim's mouth and make him knock at the door of this, that and every god !

VII

MAHĀBHĀRATA

(1) The Anuśāsana-parva of the Mahābhārata describes the exploits of Viśvāmitra in these words : deliverance of Śunaśśepa was, of course, one of them—

Ṛcīkasyātmajaś caiva Śunaśśepo mahātapāḥ
Vimokṣito mahāsatrāt paśutām apyupāgataḥ /
Hariścandrakratau devāms toṣayitvātmatejasā
Putratām anusamprāpto Viśvāmitrasya dhīmataḥ /
Nābhivādayate jyeṣṭham Devarātam narādhipa
Putrāḥ pañcāśad evāpi śaptāḥ śvapacatām gatāḥ /[85]

A man of great austerities, Śunaśśepa, son of Ṛcīka, was liberated (by Viśvāmitra) from the sacrifice, though bound as the victim. And he, in that sacrifice performed by Hariścandra, pleased the gods by his own brilliance and became the son of the wise Viśvāmitra. But the fifty sons all of them, would not greet Devarāta (Śunaśśepa) as the eldest and, hence, were cursed to the state of cooking dog's flesh.

83A. AB VII.6, RV 1.24.1 and 2.

84. Festschrift Prof. Kane (1941) p. 306 n. 8 (Mr. H. G. Narahari).

85. Mbh. 13 (Anuśāsana) 3.6-8. Citraśālā Press, Poona 1933, with Commentary Bhāratabhāvadīpa of Nīlakaṇṭha Caturdhara.

This account lands us in some confusion. It is difficult to say which exactly is responsible for this, whether the foregoing story given in the Rām. or the one from the Mbh. just recapitulated. The relative ages of the two epics are admittedly hard to determine. A period covering centuries, during which the epics might have taken their present shape only, has been postulated. Thus, according to Winternitz, "between the 4th century B.C. and the 4th century A.D. the transformation of the epic Mahābhārata into our present compilation took place, probably gradually...Small alterations and additions still continued to be made however even in later centuries. One date of the Mahābhārata does not exist at all, but the date of every part must be determined on its own account."[86] Concluding the discussion on the age of Rām., Winternitz says: "The whole Rāmāyaṇa, including the later portions was already an old and famous work when the Mahābhārata had not yet attained its present form. It is probable that the Rāmāyaṇa had its present extent and contents as early as towards the close of the 2nd century A.D. The older nucleus of the Mahābhārata, is probably older than the ancient Rāmāyaṇa...It is probable that the original Rāmāyaṇa was composed in the third century B.C. by Vālmīki on the basis of ancient ballads."[87] What was said of the Mbh., that the date of every part must be determined on its own account, well applies to the Rām. also. For in the first place, the first and the seventh books of the latter *viz.* the Bāla. and Uttara kāṇḍas respectively are accepted as later additions, and even in the Bāla kāṇḍa, the story of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, the exploits of Viśvāmitra the account of the dwarf incarnation of Viṣṇu, the descent of the Ganges, the churning of the ocean etc.—are all agglutinative in character. Special care therefore becomes necessary to fix the relative chronology of those legends which are common to both the epics. All theorisations are perforce tentative until critical editions of both works, after the fashion of the BORI Mahābhārata,[88] are made available. Ignorance, wanton or otherwise, of this important factor would result

86. Winternitz HIL p. 475 (1927).

87. Ibid. pp. 516-517.

88. It is well-known how this stupendous undertaking by the BORI has succeeded in pushing though about half of the Great Epic. The work is published upto the end of Bhīṣma parva. This crowning glory of critical scholarship in India was achieved by the late Dr. Viṣṇu Sītārām Sukthankar, who by dint of vision and dynamic activity enunciated the principles of textual criticism and evolved a perfect process of manuscript collation and editorial collaboration. For full seventeen years he was so deep in the Mbh. which was to him a universe by itself, that he had unconsciously attained sublime identification (Sārūpya) with Maharṣi Vyāsa when, at the end of his memorable, but, alas, portentous preface, he recalled

Ūrdhvabāhur viraumyeṣa na ca kaś cicchṛṇoti mām
Dharmād arthaś ca kāmaś ca sa kimartham na sevyate //

"Across the reverberating corridors of Time, we, his descendants heard his clarion call to Duty." Such was his realisation:

A critical edition of the Rāmāyaṇa has been promised by Dr. Raghu Vira (p. 390 Sukthankar Memorial Edition, Vol.1, Critical Studies in the Mahābhārata, 1944). When the two critical editions are in hand, a historical and comparative study of the legends will be placed on a secure basis. At present we have to be satisfied with the comparative aspect only not the historical, as far as it is possible.

in very fallacious conclusions. A few instances have been convincingly described by the late Dr. Sukthankar in his Epic Studies VIII which is a text-critical essay on the Rāmopākhyāna, occurring in the Āraṇyaka-parva. Professors Jacobi and Oldenberg have been proved to be victims of hasty generalisations based on passages of uncertain veracity.[89]

In the light of the above remarks, some observations of a purely comparative nature, not stressing on chronological sequence, may be recorded. Taking shelter under Winternitz's conclusion that the present text of the Rām. was a fact at the close of 2nd century A.D., while Mbh. attained that state by the 4th, apart from the immemorial tradition of Rām. being the First Poem (ādikāvya) that was composed, the section on Rām. has been placed earlier.

Now to come back to the story of Śunaśśepa. Śunaśśepa is the son of Ṛcīka : this is a point common to both Rām. and Mbh. The sacrifice is undertaken by Hariścandra : this is one with the Aitareya. Viśvāmitra's sons were fifty only and all of them were cursed (Mbh.). Rām also says similarly though, however, it does not exactly estimate his prolific achievements. AB credits him with a hundred and one, of whom the first fifty were cursed.

It is to be observed that the narration of Viśvāmitra's deeds, which were so many, was the main purpose of the Mbh. context. Therefore the Śunaśśepa incident is given in bare outline. If the poet had entered into details, there should have been a clearer rendering, so that we could discern a harmonious trend.

(2) *Harivaṁśa*—This work is regarded as part of the Mahābhārata, but outside the pale of the traditional 18 parvans. It is a kind of appendix (khila or pariśiṣṭa) for the great epic, which was a convenient and accommodating receptacle for all lore of the country. With regard to such works it is not a useful attempt to scrutinize the authenticity or genuineness of this portion or that ; nor is it useful to determine the age or date of their composition. They are intended for the edification of the common folk on whose minds, only the narrated events exert an influence rather than the academic aspects of date and authorship. In such a swollen stream of legendary matter, as the Mahābhārata, currents and cross currents, pools and whirlpools pass muster, and the inquirer runs the risk of being caught and lost amidst them. Here is an example :

The Śunaśśepa story given in the Harivaṁśa, which is the nineteenth parva so to say, is so incoherent with that told in the Anuśāsana which is the thirteenth parva. Says the Harivaṁśa[90]—

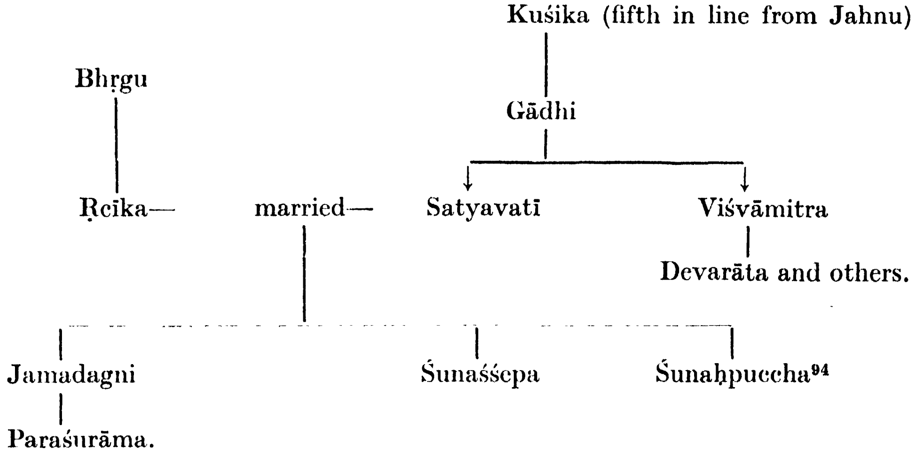
Viśvāmitrātmajānām tu Śunaśśepo'grajaḥ smṛtaḥ /
Bhārgavaḥ Kauśikatvam hi prāptaḥ sa munisattamaḥ /

89. SME Vol. 1, (1944), pp. 388 f, fn. 4 on p. 389.
90. Citraśālā Edn. (Poona) 1.27.54b—58a.

Viśvāmitrasya putras tu Śunaśśepo'bhavat kila /
Haridaśvasya yajñe tu paśutve viniyojitaḥ /
Devair dattaḥ sa vai yasmāt Devarātas tato'bhavat /
Devarātādayas sapta Viśvāmitrasya vai sutāḥ /
Dṛṣadvatīsutaś cāpi Viśvāmitrāt tathāṣṭakaḥ /

Among Viśvāmitra's sons, Śunaśśepa is considered as the first-born, and thereby that sage who was a Bhārgava, descended from Bhṛgu, attained the position of a Kauśika. It happened this way that at the sacrifice instituted by Haridaśva,[91] Śunaśśepa had been yoked as a paśu ; then he became Viśvāmitra's son, for, the gods (having granted life to the victim) made him over to Viśvāmitra. Hence he got the name Devarāta (god-given). Devarāta and others are seven sons[92] of Viśvāmitra, and through Dṛṣadvatī also a son called Aṣṭaka.

Śunaśśepa's pedigree is also different, it is an interesting revelation. He was the sage Ṛcīka's son all right, and the middle one too, but placed between Jamadagni the elder and Śunaḥpuccha[93] the younger brother : The chapter under review gives the whole genealogy, consistent in itself—



King Gādhi gave his daughter Satyavatī in marriage to Ṛcīka, son of Bhṛgu. Ṛcīka was pleased with his wife and prepared the holy caru for the sake of a son

91. This is neither Hariścandra (AB), nor Ambarīṣa (Rām.) :

92. Viśvāmitra's sons defy all attempts at enumeration ! Book to book the number changes ranging from 7 to 101. In this very chapter (Hari. 1.27) the sum of seven is mentioned but the list comes up in all to 14 at least. That he was a prolific parent is acknowledged everywhere. Mbh. 13.4 counts 62 sons. Nīlakaṇṭha on v. 60.

93. No Śuno-lāṅgūla here contrary to AB, where Ś-puccha is the eldest and Ś-lāṅgūla the youngest. See next note.

94. For the genealogy and the following narrative ref. Hari. 1.27. 12-35, and further (41-42 Ibid.)—

Aurvasyaivam Ṛcīkasya Satyavatyām mahāyaśāḥ /
Jamadagnis tapovīryāj jajñe brahmavidām varaḥ /
Madhyamaś ca Śunaśśepaḥ Śunaḥpucchaḥ kaniṣṭhakaḥ /

to himself and also one to his father-in-law Gādhi on request. Both parts of the caru, he handed to his wife Satyavatī pointing out which she should take and which her mother. Somehow at the time of partaking the sacred viands, the mother gave away her portion to the daughter. As Satyavatī conceived, Ṛcīka, by divine instinct, discovered the mistake. In his dispensation, the caru that was meant for the mother-in-law was to produce a strong and valiant son, invincible and conquering all Kṣatriyas, and that for his wife was to produce a most eminent sage, wise in thought and serene in temperament. That was just right. But fate turned the tables.[95] Satyavatī was sad, because she at all events preferred a saintly son to a redoubtable warrior ; such a one was fitting for her father who was a king. Therefore she begged her consort, the sage Ṛcīka to change the progeny even then, for what is it that is impossible for a divine sage who can make and unmake things ? She proposed an alternative also lest she should offend her revered husband— ' Confer upon me a saintly son only ; if inevitable, let his son be of the warrior kind'. Ṛcīka was moved by his beloved's fervent prayer and at once granted it. Thus was born the sage Jamadagni.[96] As the result of the other protion of the sacred caru, the sage Viśvāmitra was born.[97] But how to reconcile the legend of Ṛcīka having three sons of whom Śunaśśepa was the middle one ? The author of the Harivaṁśa, whoever it is, simply appended that series of three brothers to this illustrious Bhṛgu line substituting Jamadagni's name for the eldest ![98] We have occasion to say elsewhere that except the name of Śunaśśepa, the series of Śuna-names are spurious. At any rate the latter do not fit in with the context. We may at worst resort to the convenient theory of several persons of the same name. The Ṛcīkas are different, the father of a Jamadagni and the brother-in-law of a Viśvāmitra being poles apart from the Ṛcīka who sold a son for price.

VIII

PURĀṆAS

(1) *Brāhma*

This Purāṇa[99] is always stated first in the list of eighteen mahā-purāṇas and hence sometimes called Ādi-Purāṇa. Looking into the contents, however, it is

95. The story is related in Mbh. 13.4 with slight elaboration here and there. The change of caru was due to the mischief of Satyavatī's mother who did not scruple to play fraud on her own daughter.

96. Ibid. 35

Tataḥ Satyavatī putram janayāmāsa Bhārgavam /
Tapasyabhiratam dāntam Jamadagnim śamātmakam /

97. Ibid. 42 f.

Viśvāmitram tu dāyādam Gādhiḥ Kuśikanandanaḥ /
Janayāmāsa putram tu tapovidyāśamātmakam /
Prāpya brahmarṣisamatām yo'yam saptarṣitām gataḥ /

98. Compare Winternitz's remarks on p. 443. HIL Vol. 1, regarding the genuineness of the work.

99. In this section the Purāṇas are considered in the order in which they are dealt with by Winternitz. HIL p. 531 The earlier Purāṇas must have, according to the Professor, come into being before the 7th century A.D. (p. 525). This always rules out the interpolations which are a menace to a systematic appreciation of the Purāṇas.

revealed that only a very small portion of it could be called ancient. Glorification of several holy places on the Ganges is a special feature of this Purāṇa.

The Śunaśśepa legend[100] is described in the Gautamī-māhātmya (chs. 70–175), which is a glorification of the sacred places on the Ganges. Sages Nārada and Parvata once visited the Ikṣvāku king Hariścandra. Wondering as to why all creatures under creation hanker after progeny, the king sought enlightenment at their hands, being himself childless. They replied suitably and advised him: "Go to the sacred Gautamī (holy place) and worship Varuṇa. He will grant your wish." The king obeyed, Varuṇa pleased by his worship, granted his request on condition that he would sacrifice to him the very son that would be born. Hariścandra agreed and returned to the capital. But after the child was actually born, the king was so overwhelmed with paternal love that he, almost in the manner related in AB, put off discharging his duty by the God. At last the young Prince, Rohita, was sixteen and fit to be Crown Prince, when Varuṇa came for the last time and insisted on his due. The king summoned the Prince in the presence of ministers and priests and told him all the history of his birth and the imminent sacrifice. But the youth sharply retorted: "Wait, I shall first sacrifice to Viṣṇu, Lord of the Worlds, with Varuṇa as paśu (victim), the priests shall help me in this."[101] Varuṇa was enraged and cursed the king with dropsy. Rohita went to the forest; five years elapsed and during the sixth, Rohita came to the same holy spot on the Ganges where his father had worshipped Varuṇa. There he met Ajīgarta, son of sage Vayas,[102] followed by wife and three sons. Getting acquainted with him in a casual manner, he bargained for Śunaśśepa in lieu of a thousand cows, besides grain, gold and cloth. Rohita then went to the father and told him to offer to Varuṇa the sage's son who was bought for price. Then, what is strange, Hariścandra refused to sacrifice the brāhmaṇa: "Having made them (Brāhmaṇas) victims, I am not anxious to live a pitiful life. It is not fair, death is preferable to making the twice-born a sacrificial victim. Go therefore, my son, happily with the Brāhmaṇa." At this time was heard the Voice from Heaven: "O king of kings go to the sacred Gautamī with Rohita, the priests and with the son of the Brāhamṇa. There celebrate the sacrifice *without killing Śunaśśepa*, and the sacrifice will still be complete."

100. Brahma-Purāṇa. ĀnSS. No. 28 (1895) ch. 104 (pp. 246-295) and ch. 150 (p. 361 f.)

101. Rohita uvāca—Aham pūrvam mahārāja ṛtvigbhis sapurohitaḥ / Viṣṇave lokanāthāya yakṣye'ham tvaritam śuciḥ / Paśunā Varuṇenātha tad anujñātum arhasi / Ibid. Ch. 104 st. 38. The sarcasm behind 'paśunā' is irresistible!

102. 'Ṛṣes tu Vayasaḥ sutam'. According to Vedic texts he is 'Sauyavasi' *i.e.* son of Sūyavas. How patent the error in text-transmission or of legendary tradition! It could easily be 'Ṛṣes sūyavasas sutam". No. v.l. for the Purāṇa reading. But a later chapter (150) has Suyavasyātmajo loke' jigartiriti viśrutaḥ; the line may point to the name being 'Suyavasya' taking the whole as a compound. There is a v.l. 'suyajñasyātmajo' in this context. Illustrative of Purāṇic license if not vagary is that the name Ajīgarta is here Ajīgarti twice after final e and o (Sk. 86) with initial a elided, and finally (four times) as simply Jīgarti, the initial a being dropped perhaps on the analogy of Bhāguri's Law.

Then the king repaired to the banks of the Ganges with the priest Vasiṣṭha, the sages Viśvāmitra and Vāmadeva. The sacrifice was performed in regular manner. At the proper time, Viśvāmitra addressed the Assembly and the Gods. "Pray, permit all of you, the gods severally to whom he as oblation is due (to be sacrificed),—permit this Śunaśśepa (to be free). Foremost of the Vipras, may he bathe in the sacred Gautamī and offer prayer to the gods, whereby they shall be pleased." With the approval of the assembly, Śunaśśepa bathed in the sacred river and praised the gods who declared : "This sacrifice is complete without killing Śunaśśepa." (kratuḥ pūrṇo bhavatyeṣaḥ Śunaśśepavadham vinā). Varuṇa was specially pleased. Viśvāmitra honoured Śunaśśepa before the Assembly and adopted him as his son and made him the eldest, taking precedence over his other sons. Those who did not accept his priority were cursed and those who acquiesced were blessed. All this happened on the south bank of the Gautamī. Innumerable are the holy places (8014) thereat,[103] they being named after Hariścandra, Śunaśśepa, Viśvāmitra, Rohita and so on.

This Purāṇa in a later chapter (150) describes how in another tīrtha called Paiśāca, a vipra was freed from a ghostly existence. That vipra is no other than our Ajīgarta (or Jīgarti as the text transforms him), who merited that punishment because he sold his middle son Śunaśśepa to a Kṣatriya for being sacrificed. During life, he suffered severe illness, after death was subjected to untold punishments in Hell and finally was turned into a ghost. Śunaśśepa once, while passing that way, heard a deep groaning sound, on tracing which he was told by the ghost, the miserable punishment it was fated to suffer. Śunaśśepa was stricken with sorrow, bathed in the Gautamī and offered watery oblation[104] to the father (pitṛ). Ajīgrata was absolved of the sin and ascended heaven.

While this account of the Brahma Purāṇa corresponds in all significant details with the AB, the deliverance of Śunaśśepa is effected in a peculiar manner. This poetical innovation is natural to an age which looked upon sacrifices, particularly the human sacrifice, with horror. The sacrificial age had been substituted by an age which believed in washing off all sins in the holy waters of the Ganges. So all stories naturally converge into this doctrine which appealed to the common people whose outlook, with time and tide, had totally changed. Ajīgarta's redemption is, of course, a novelty.

(2) *Vāyu Purāṇa*

The version of the Śunaśśepa story given here[105] fully accords with that given in Harivaṁśa,[106] but for the substitution of Haridaśva for Hariścandra which,

103. ityādyaṣṭasahasrāṇi tīrthānyatha caturdaśa /

104. For the moment, the Purāṇa does not mind the incongruity of Śunaśśepa offering tarpaṇa for one who was no longer father to him !

105. BI ed. Mitra (1888) Vol. II, ch. 29 st. 89-92.

106. But Narahari that VP follows Mbh. It was more proper to say Vāyu Purāṇa and Harivaṁśa bear all identity except the name Haridaśva, which is but oversight on the part of the author of Harivaṁśa. A look into the original texts and the accompanying conspectus will convince.

clearly, is an oversight. Most of the verses are common to both. It is not easy to say which of the two was the borrower. Vāyu Purāṇa is assigned to an age[107] earlier than the celebrated Bāna (early 7th cent.), who heard the Purāṇa read to him, and later than the Gupta period (4th and 5th cent.) which is described in the Purāṇic text. Which then is the date of Harivaṁśa which is a complement to the Mahābhārata? As already remarked quite a wide period of time has been suggested *i.e.* 4th cent. B.C. to 4th cent. A.D., during which the Great Epic of India took shape so as to comprehend 'the present extent, contents and character'. Even then, allowance must be given for small alterations and additions which continued to be made in later centuries. It will be nearer truth if we think that both Vāyu Purāṇa and Harivaṁśa owe to a common source, may be in this case Mahābhārata.

(3) *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*

This Purāṇa[108] which is ascribed to the 10th cent. A.D. by Winternitz[109] and to the 9th by C. V. Vaidya and others, narrates the Śunaśśepa legend in two contexts. The first part of it up to his deliverance from the stakes is related in connection with Hariścandropākhyāna,[110] as the sacrifice was celebrated under the ægis of that king. The second part *viz.* his adoption into the Viśvāmitra family is narrated in what is called Paraśurāmopākhyāna.[111] The story of Viśvāmitra comes there naturally as the two heroes Paraśurāma and Viśvāmitra are closely related as members of one family. For as shown in the previous section (see genealogical table), Paraśurāma's grandmother Satyavatī is Viśvāmitra's sister.

The two narrations put together fully and accurately reproduce the version of AB, the difference being only in the vehicle of expression. The Brāhmaṇa is a mixture of Vedic prose and the gāthā while the Purāṇa is entirely in the śloka; still, there is so much of verbal correspondence that it is only fair to say that the author of the Purāṇa has rewritten the AB in the form of verse, with the ancient text acutally before him.[112] But one change, and that for the better perhaps,

107. Winternitz HIL 1, pp. 553-554.

108. Ed. Eugene Burnouf (Paris 1847). A beautiful but incomplete edition. Only nine skandhas have been published in three volumes. Burnouf's valuable introduction to the Bhāgavata Purāṇa has been profusely quoted by scholars. He is highly praised by Max Müller as a great teacher. It was inspiration derived from this savant that prompted M.M. to conceive, undertake and bring out the famous edition of the Ṛgveda with Sāyaṇa's commentary. The closing paragraph of M.M's preface to the second volume of the first edition reveals both the teacher and the pupil. "When I heard of his death," M.M. records, "I felt—and I believe that many engaged in similar studies shared the feeling—as if our work had lost much of its charm and its purpose. 'What will Burnouf say?' was my earliest thought, on completing the first volume of the Ṛgveda. And now, as I am finishing the second, in its turn submitted to the judgment of so many scholars whose friendship I value and whose learning I admire, my thoughts turn again to him who is no longer among us, and I think, not without sadness, of what his judgment would have been." 1853, pp. xl-xli of Vol. I, Second Edition, 1890. Gorresio, Roth, Goldstücker, M. M. and several others were fellow-students under Burnouf.

109. Winternitz. HIL (Calcutta Univ. 1927) Vol. I, p. 556, and n. 3 same page.

110. Ed. Burnouf. Vol. III, Skandha IX, ch. 7 vv. 6-25.

111. Ibid. ch. 16 vv. 28-36.

112. Ch. XVI vv. 33-36 are repetition of the AB text almost verbatim.

may be noticed. Indra who was pleased with the sacrifice gave the golden chariot to Hariścandra, and not to Śunaśśepa as told in the AB. That it is a weak spot in the Aitareya construction has already been discussed.[113] The Bhāgavata adds support to the view.[114]

(4) *Devī Bhāgavata*

The claim of this work to be classed among the eighteen main Purāṇas has not been granted,[115] perhaps reasonably, judging from the prolixity of its style ad nauseam, not to speak of the kind of subject-matter which marks the extreme into which a narrator's license can carry. The Śunaśśepākhyāna is here told in no less than 4 chapters[116] making a total of 239 ślokas. One feature is that in the bare outline it has not much strayed from the ancient source the Aitareya. The personalities are almost all the same, the motifs are the same. But the haltings at every step to elaborate a detail with unbridled fantasy have rendered the narrative heavy, sometimes the serenity of the story has been rudely disturbed, so much so that it verges on absurdity *e.g.* Hariścandra's bargaining with Varuṇa and the behaviour of this august divinity of the Veda, Supreme Lord of Law and Order, as depicted in this work, provide more of amusement than of high ideals like a stern sense of duty by the God or by the ancestors. The conversations[117] between the king and the God remind one of a bargaining in which the common folk indulge. To give another instance, when the sacrifice was afoot[118] with Śunaśśepa bound to the stakes, it is neither tragedy nor a holy sacrifice that the book describes. The sacrifice converts itself into a rabble and a melodrama. For a historical study of the legend, however, the work provides valuable material. It illustrates the part the narrator's fancy plays in the growth or transformation of a legend. And, as such works are composed for the sake of readers or listeners, they easily betray the level of culture and the standard of taste which the people had attained or to which they had descended. Now a few details.

(*a*) Hariścandra does penance on the banks of the Ganges to appease Varuṇa, by the advice of Vasiṣṭha, his family priest. That Nārada did not appear in such a recent work is rather strange.

113. See *supra* section 3.

114. Tataḥ puruṣamedhena Hariścandro mahāyaśāḥ
Muktodaro'yajad devān Varuṇādīn mahatkathaḥ / 20
Viśvāmitro'bhavat tasmin hotā cādhvaryur ātmavān
Jamadagnir abhūd Brahmā Vasiṣṭho'yāsyas sāmagaḥ / 21
Tasmai tuṣto dadāvindraḥ śātakumbhamayam ratham
Śunaśśephasya māhātmyam upariṣṭāt pravakṣyate / 22.

Compare Pārgiter's remarks on p. 63 JRAS. 1917.

115. Winternitz HIL Vol. I (Calcutta), p. 555.

116. Devī-Bhāgavata (Poona edn. with Marāṭhi tr.) Skandha VII chs. 14-17, whereas the Rām. devotes 2 cantos with 48 ślokas on the whole. Mbh. (3), Hari (6), Bhāg (25) and VP (4).

117. The whole of ch. 15. Ibid.

118. Ch. 16.23-59, 17.1-38. Ibid.

(*b*) After the birth of the child, the king's manner of dodging the god is somewhat different. Each time Varuṇa is put off, the period of advantage gained is more ; the arguments are quite ingenious but not high in taste. Thus after the birth of a child the father is purified in ten days but the mother is fit for rites, only after a month; so the God was put off for one month. Then the teeth should appear. Then the boy deserves to have his hair-cut (caula). The fourth round is won on the pretext of upanayana (Initiation to Study) and the fifth by samāvartana (Return from Study). On the sixth round, Rohita escaped to the forest even without the knowledge of the father.[119] Wrathful at this, Varuṇa cursed the king to suffer from dropsy (jalodara).

(*c*) Rohita learning of the father's illness wants to return to the capital. But Indra, in the form of an old vipra, advises him to stay away on a most ludicrous argument, unworthy of a god : 'Life is dear to all creatures. On account of life only, the wife and children become dear. In order to protect his life, the king will kill you at the sacrifice and get cured of his illness. Therefore you should not go back to the father's house. When the father is dead, then only you will go for the sake of obtaining the kingdom.[120] Again and again, the divine lord appeared and prevented Rohita by means of ingenious arguments, from getting back to his place.

(*d*) Hariścandra goes again to Vasiṣṭha seeking advice as to what to do to cure the illness. He advises : 'Perform sacrifice by means of a son bought for price, then the curse will end'. The king sent the ministers in search of a son to buy. Śunaśśepa was bought off for a hundred cows from Ajīgarta who was living in penury.

(*e*) When the victim was tied to the sacrificial post there was great commotion in the assembly. Śunaśśepa himself was weeping. The Śamitṛ (the killer of the sacrificial animal) refused to do his duty which was on this occasion too cruel to bear. Ajīgarta came forward to perform the act for double the fee. All were struck aghast ; they began to curse Ajīgarta :

> Piśāco'yam mahāpāpī krūrakarmā dvijākṛtiḥ
> Yas tvayam svasutam hantum udyataḥ kulapāmsanaḥ /[121]

At this stage Viśvāmitra intervened and pleaded before the king to release the victim, as it was not fair to cut up another body in order to save his own. The king refused to honour his proposal. Then Viśvāmitra went up to Śunaśśepa and taught him the Vāruṇa-mantra which the latter recited with all devotion. Varuṇa was pleased and arrived on the scene. Hariścandra begged his mercy for the whole medley and Varuṇa permitted him to let go the boy.

119. According to AB, Rohita was apprised of the situation in Varuṇa's presence after he became fit to wear armour, upon which, he refused to submit to sacrifice and went away to forest, bow in hand.

120. Ch. 16. 7-9. Ibid.

121. Ch. 16. 34. Ibid.

(*f*) Now another coloured thread is woven into the texture. The released Śunaśśepa addresses the sacrificial assembly ! 'O gentlemen of omniscient knowledge ! whose son am I now ? Who is my father hereafter ? With your verdict, I shall resort to him for protection'.

Putro'ham kasya sarvajñāḥ pitā me ko'grataḥ param
Bhavatām vacanāt tasya śaraṇam pravrajāmyaham /[122]

The members said : 'Of whom else would he be the son, when he is Ajīgarta's progeny ?' The sage Vāmadeva : "No." He was sold for price and the king bought him, so he belongs to the king, undoubtedly. Or, he should belong to Varuṇa, as he released him from the bonds. For, five kinds are the fathers as they say :

Annadātā bhayatrātā tathā vidyāpradaś ca yaḥ
Tathā vittapradaś caiva pañcaite pitaraḥ smṛtāḥ / [123]

There was a deadlock when the god's name was brought into competition. But Vasiṣtha gave a reasonal judgment : "When the father, devoid of affection, sold the son, he ceased to be that for, he got wealth instead. The king acquired him no doubt, but he forfeited his claim when he offered him to the gods by yoking him to the post, and he has derived benefit also. Nor does Śunaśśepa belong to Varuṇa, who released him only after being pleased with his praise". So,

Kauśikasya sutaś cāyam ariṣte yena rakṣitaḥ
Mantram datvā mahāvīryam Varuṇasyātisaṅkaṭe /[124]

'He becomes the son of Kauśika who saved him from calamity by imparting a powerful mantra in praise of Varuṇa'.[125] Members of the assembly immediately approved of the decision. Śunaśśepa went over to Viśvāmitra, who held him by the right hand and took him home at once (satvaraḥ). Varuṇa, pleased, went to his abode. And all went to their own houses :[126]

122. 17.22. Ibid.

123. What enumeration ! Five kinds, but only four are stated. The father who begets is the fifth, perhaps. 17.27 ibid.

124. 17.33-34. Ibid.

125. Note Vasiṣṭha's high regard for Viśvāmitra.

126. Viśvāmitras tu jagrāha tam kare dakṣiṇe tadā
Ehi putra gṛham me tvam ityuktvā premapūritaḥ /
Varuṇas tu prasannātmā jagāma ca svamālayam /
Ṛtvijaś ca tathā sabhyāḥ svagṛhān niryayustadā /
17. 36-38

A truly purāṇic finish !

A Conspectus of the Śunaśśepa References

The work	Concerned king	Purpose of	The victim	Substitute	Lineage	The price	Viśvāmitra's part	Gods concerned and other remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
(1) RV	—	—	Śunaśśepa	—	—	—	—	Agni liberated Śunaśśepa from the stakes (RV 5.2.7) Varuṇa released Śunaśśepa from fetters 1.24.12.13.
(2) AB	Hariścandra	for the sake of a son	Rohita	Śunaśśepa	Middle son of starving Ajīgarta	Cows 100 100 100	Viś. Hotṛ priest at the sacrifice ; later as Ś. went over to him, Viś. adopted him into his family as eldest son.	Prajāpati, Agni, Varuṇa, again Agni, Viśvedevas, Indra, Aśvins and Uṣas were praised in 97 Ṛk. verses. The chains fell off as Uṣas was praised.
							First fifty sons declined to recognise and were cursed. Madhucchandas with the other fifty accepted and were blessed.	
(3) Sarvā.	Hariścandra	No sacrifice is indicated					Śunaśśepa is called Kṛtrima Vaiśvāmitra Devarāta, suggesting Śunaś-	Hariścandra's name occurs as an alternative deity of RV 1. 28.9. His

The work	Concerned king	Purpose of	The victim	Substitute	Lineage	The price	Viśvāmitra part	Gods concerned and other remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
							śepa's adoption by Viśvāmitra and also the god's favour to Śunaśśepa and then to Viśvāmitra.	complicity in the sacrifice of Śunaśśepa has to be imagined as AB dates earlier than Sarāv.
(4) Rām.	Ambarīṣa	common weal	Not specified. A human being according to Gor. victim carried away by Indra.	Śunaśśepa.	Middle son of Ṛcīka (not stated as poor (Gor.)	100,000 cows and heaps of precious stones.	Viś. described as uncle. did not attend Sacrifice. But, prior to that, at the puṣkara, taught two gāthās that secured his release. Sequel like adoption etc. not dealt with.	Indra liberated Śunaśśepa. Varuṇa not mentioned All sons, Madhucchandas etc. were cursed before sacrifice as they refused to substitute for Śunaśśepa.
(5) Mbh.	Hariścandra	not stated	Śunaśśepā of great penance (mahātapāḥ)	—	Son of Ṛcīka	—	Śunaśśepa liberated by Viśvāmitra though a victim at the sacrifice, became his eldest son. All the 50 sons who did not accept were cursed.	Śunaśśepa pleased the gods by his own brilliance (ātmatejasā)

(6)	Hari.	Haridaśva	not stated	Śunaś-śepa	—	Middle son of Ṛcīka ; Jamada agni elder and Śunaḥ-puccha younger brother.	—	Śunaśśepa became the eld-est son of Viśvāmitra known as Devarāta.	No reference to cursing the sons. No details.
(7)	Brahma	Hariś-candra	for the sake of a son	Rohita	Śunaś-śepa	Middle son Ajigarta, poor and famished.	1000 of cows grain, gold and cloth.	Viś. attends the sacrifice and addresses the Assembly to pronounce Ś. free. Bath in the River and prayer to Gods. Viś. adopted Ś. as eldesst son. Some sons cursed and some blessed.	Varuṇa is pro-minent. Heavenly Voice-aśarīravāk. Vasiṣṭha and Vāmadeva as priests. Sacifice with-out killing. Ajīgarta's redemption.
(8)	VP	Hariś-candra	not stated	Śunaśśepa	—	exactly same as 6 above. Some repeated.	same as 6 above		No reference to cursing of the sons.
(9)	Bhāg	Hariś-candra	for the sake of a son	Rohita	Śunaśśepa	Middle son of Ajīgarta	price not stated.	Viś. Hotṛ at the sacrifice then the adop-tion as eldest son etc. just as in AB (2) above.	Same as (2) above.

	The work	Concerned king	Purpose of	The victim	Substitute	Lineage	The price	Viśvāmitra part	Gods concerned and other remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
(10)	Devī Bh.	Hariś-candra	for the sake of a son	Rohita	Śunaśśepa	Middle son of Ajīgarta (nirdhana)	cows 100 200	Viś. present at sacrifice, pleads with king for Ś.'s life. On refusal teaches the Varuṇa-mantra. Discussion as to whom Ś. should belong. Opinions divergent. Vasiṣṭha gave verdict in favour of Viś.	Varuṇa is the god who freed Ś. Vasiṣṭha, family priest, was constantly approached by the king for advice.

127. The works tabulated are: 1. Ṛgveda (RV), 2. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (AB), 3. Sarvānukramaṇī (Sarvā). 4. Rāmāyaṇa (Rām). 5. Mahābhārata (Mbh.). 6. Hari-Vaṁśa (Hari.). 7. Brahma Purāṇa (Brahma). 8. Vāyu Purāṇa (VP). 9. Bhāgavata (Bhāg.)· 10. Devī-Bhāgavata (Devī Bh.)

128. Note—Ś = Śunaśśepa. Viś. = Viśvāmitra.

129. Note—The Nirukta alludes to Śunaśśepa being bought for price in support of the dictum that men are also sold like women. This has been amplified in the Vās Dh. Sūtra (17.30 *et seq*) which records another interesting phase of the story. After Ś. was set free there arose a dispute among the priests as to whose son he should be. He did not respond. Then they said: Let him choose any one he likes. Then Śunaśśepa chose to be son of Viśvāmitra who was the Hotṛ priest. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa, in one sentence (4.7.16), says: The son of Viśvāmitra was Śunaśśepa, originally descendent of Bhṛgu, now given by the gods and thence named Devarāta.

REVIEW OF THE CONSPECTUS

A glance at the conspectus will at once show how the various works have deviated from the main current of the story. The incident after all is one, it did not happen to two or more Śunaśśepas, nor did it occur in two or more places. Therefore while employing expressions like version and recension which are almost becoming technical with the advance of critical scholarship, some care requires to be exercised. Should we, for instance, talk of the number of versions of the Śunaśśepa story, ordinarily we shall be obliged to say they are as many as there are works which deal with the legend ; because, with each narration, there will be some innovation, wanton or otherwise. Such changes are mere embellishments and are of little consequence regarding the framework. Secondly, the time-factor should also be considered ; the distinction of different versions must naturally apply to works which are more or less contemporaneous. With regard to works beyond the range of history the question does not arise, for all are ancient. But a work of the 5th cent. A.D. cannot presume to vie with the ancient Aitareya to propound a different version of the story. Any version after all should be backed up by an element of truth. Flagrant innovations which reflect the pulse of a people or of an age cannot claim the status of versions, indeed. The Brahma Purāṇa, the first-mentioned of all the Purāṇas, for instance, introduces the Invisible Voice (aśarīra-vāk) —' Do not sacrifice Śunaśśepa ; the sacrifice is complete without the immolation '. Śunaśśepa bathes in the Gomatī-kṣetra and is absolved of all responsibility by the sacrifice. The motive for this innovation is purely local, that is to glorify the holiness of the Ganges and to signify a revolt against human sacrifice. But can this be designated as a different version ? It is not supported by any trend of tradition which touches the hoary past. The Devī Bhāgavata is full of innovations which are introduced to explain, as it were, the different stages of the story. Thus Hariścandra according to AB first asks for 10 days' time to sacrifice the new born babe, but, the Devī Bhāgavata raises it to one month, for the father is eligible to perform religious rites after 10 days of child-birth, but the mother becomes eligible only after a month ! She should accompany the husband in all religious functions, according to the Ordinances. Can this be called a version ? Harivaṁśa and Vāyu Purāṇa find themselves in a medley. Having represented the traditional descent of Jamadagni as the son of Ṛcīka, the author is at a loss to fix up the Śunaśśepa brothers. Fortunately he did not say that Jamadagni was also called Śunaḥpuccha, but simply removed the last man, Śunolāṅgūla, in the ' seriatim arrangement ' ! Thus, the brotherhood bears this galaxy—Jamadagni Śunaśśepa and Śunaḥpuccha. Can this be called a version ? Similarly, Haridaśva is an unconscious substitute for Hariścandra. When once it entered the holy writ, it was suffered because, perhaps, Haridaśva is a name of the Sun God, from whom the Ikṣvākus were descended. Hariścandra was an Ikṣvāku ; hence, there could be reconciliation by regarding the king as Haridaśva *alias* Hariścandra.

Let us consider one other point. In most of the works, the legend is treated *en passant*. The importance given or the interest which attaches to the story may be measured, in a way, by the extent of the description in each. The Aitareya,

owing to its antiquity, may not come into the picture. All the same, it devōtes a whole chapter in six khaṇḍas (sections) comprising roughly 55 prose bits and 31 gāthās. Other works allot as follows :

1.	Rāmāyaṇa—	48	Ślokas	(2 cantos)
2.	Mahābhārata—	3	,,	
3.	Harivaṁśa—	6	,,	(total of two contexts)
4.	Brahma Purāṇa—	113	,,	(2 chapters)
5.	Vāyu Purāṇa—	4	,,	
6.	Bhāgavata—	25	,,	(parts of 2 chapters)
7.	Devī Bhāgavta	194	,,	(4 chapters)

Of these, Nos. 4, 6 and 7 follow Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, except the narrator's amplifications here and there. The main features are common, as shown in the conspectus. Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 5 show some divergences. One common divergence that really matters is that Śunaśśepa is the son of Ṛcīka not of Ajīgarta. That is, the family itself is differently stated, for Ṛcīka is a Bhārgava, Ajīgarta is an Āṅgirasa. While the orthodox school, dating back to the time of the Sarvānukramaṇī and prior still the Arṣānukramaṇī, reaffirms the AB account by assigning Śunaśśepa to the Āṅgirasa family changed to that of Viśvāmitra, the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Harivaṁśa and Vāyu Purāṇa declare him to be a Bhārgava changed into a Vaiśvāmitra. Taking recourse to conjecture only—for no other deduction is possible,—this deviation might have been based on stories current among the populace; it may rêpresent popular tradition in other words. Another point is about the King's name, Ambarīṣa in the Rāmāyaṇa ; Hariścandra in Mbh. and VP, Haridaśva in Harivaṁśa. We have submitted that Haridaśva might have been an oversight on the part of Harivaṁśa. A similar plea must reconcile the divergence of Rām., as Ambarīṣa is nowhere else mentioned as an Ikṣvāku prince. The Ambarīṣa of the Mbh. is just an ancient king (Sorensen p. 30), nothing to do with the Ikṣvākus. Curiously, Hariścandra is not stated among the Ikṣvāku princes, whose dynastic list is given in Rām. (1.70). Perhaps our Hariścandra is identical with Ambarīṣa. For the present purpose we submit that the difference in names is due to the narrator's whim or ignorance. The dynastic lists presented in the Epics and the Purāṇas are truly confusing and utterly inconsistent with one another.

If, in the light of the above discussion, we come to think of versions at all, they can only be two ; one, the orthodox version represented by AB, followed by the Brāhma, Bhāgavata and Devī Bhāgavata ; the other, the popular version reflected in the Rām., Mbh., Hari. and VP.

The Ṛgvedic Nucleus

A Orthodox version	B Popular version
Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (55+31)	Rāmāyaṇa (48)
Brahma Purāṇa (113)	Mahābhārata (3)
Bhāgavata (25)	Harivaṁśa (6)
Devī Bhāgavata (194)	Vāyu Purāṇa (4)

Works under A, have dealt with the legend at some length and hence admit of correct appreciation. Under B, we can see the summary manner in which the story is disposed of, on the basis of which no inference of certain validity can be drawn. The chief criterion in so grouping them is the likelihood of a popular version concurrent with the orthodox one.

IX

MODERN OPINIONS

The Legend of Śunaśśepa has been a favourite study to many a scholar of recent times. At first it drew attention as a very ancient story so full of human interest. But later scholars like Max Müller and Roth dived deep into their bearings and recorded their impressions a hundred years ago. The former translated the entire piece into English in his history of Ancient Sanskrit Literature[130] and the latter's critique, with a German translation of the legend, came out in the Indische Studien.[131] An exhaustive and invaluable study has since been provided by Keith in his Rig-veda Brāhmaṇas Translated.[132] In the long period of time that divided the two scholars Roth and Keith, the legend continued to be of interest to many, from the point of view of Human Sacrifices in Ancient India. Hillebrandt[133] and Eggeling[134] considered the question deeply. The one believed and the other did not believe in the existence of human sacrifices. Wilson wrote an essay on human sacrifices and John Muir incoroprated his impressions in his Compendium[135]

Before dealing with this subject of world-wide interest, we may know how the legend has impressed as a piece of literature. Roth has surmised a more ancient metrical version of the story ;[136] this inference is evidently based on the fact that certain verses (gāthās) have been interspersed in the narrative, and sometimes the intervening prose appears to patch up the factual detail between two verses. The gāthās are, it is generally agreed, reminiscent of what was most current among the people, and perpetuated in oral transmission from person to person and generation to generation. Regarding the make up of the story, Roth arrived at the following conclusions :

(*i*) The oldest legend about Śunaśśepa (alluded to in RV 1.24.11-13 and RV 5.2.7) knows only of his miraculous deliverance by divine help from the peril of death.

(*ii*) This story becomes expanded into a narrative of Śunaśśepa's threatened slaughter as a sacrificial victim and of his deliverance through Viśvāmitra.

130. ASL pp. 408-420.
131. IS 1. 458-464, 2,112-123.
132. HOS Vol. 25 (1920)
133. Ritualliteratur, pp. 153-6
134. SBE XLIV. xli- xlv.
135. OST 1² pp. 355-360.
136. Weber IL p. 47, Keith (HOS 25) p. 68.

(*iii*) This immolation-legend becomes severed into two essentially distinct versions,[137] the oldest forms of which are respectively represented by the stories in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Rāmāyaṇa.

(*iv*) The latter becomes eventually the predominant one, but its proper central point is no longer the deliverance from immolation but the incorporation of Śunaśśepa, or (with a change of persons) of Ṛcīka, into the family of the Kuśīkas. It thus becomes in the end a family legend of the race of Viśvāmitra.

There is thus no historical, perhaps not even a genealogical, result to be gained here. On the other hand, the story obtains an important place in the circle of those narratives in which the sacerdotal literature expressed its views regarding the character and agency of Viśvāmitra.[138]

The late Professor Keith, polymath and critic, has analysed the legend threadbare. It is a piece of work which should serve as an example of critical investigation. Though often oppressive, and never satisfied with the accuracy of things like the proverbial tārkika,[139] Keith as a critic undoubtedly exercised a powerful restraint on the hasty and the fanciful in the Research Forum. It must be said, however, that his writings lacked warmth and sympathy, qualities, for instance, that endeared Max Müller to all classes of the literati.[140]

Keith[141] notices a threefold structure in the legend comprising (*a*) the episode of Varuṇa, Hariścandra and Rohita, (*b*) the episode of Śunaśśepa and Ajīgarta (add Rohita to provide the link); and (*c*) the episode of Viśvāmitra's sons and Śunaśśepa (add, again, Viśvāmitra also). To restate the 'krama'

(*a*) Hariścandra—Varuṇa—Rohita,

(*b*) Rohita—Ajīgarata—Śunaśśepa; and

(*c*) Śunaśśepa—Viśvāmitra—Viśvāmitra's sons.

It is pointed out, as already shown by us in the sub-section on RV references, that the RV provides no information whatever about Hariścandra or Rohita or Ajīgarta; so, the whole narrative is a later invention. The utilisation of the RV

137. Mr. Narahari concludes his survey of the Legend of Śunaśśepa in Vedic and post-Vedic Literature as follows: "We have thus three recensions of the legend of Śunaśśepa." *Vide* A Volume of Studies in Indology presented to MM. P. V. Kane (1941) p. 307. We are obliged to point out that this is an uncritical statement from all accepted canons of textual criticism. *cf.* the explanations of "Recension and version" in Dr. Katre's Introduction to Indian Textual Criticism" (1941), p. 95. Narahari perhaps meant to say that versions of the story were as many.

138. Rendered by Muir. OST, 1³ p. 359 f.

139. One is reminded of Kṣemendra's compliment to this class of scholars in his Kavikaṇṭhābharaṇa (Kāvyamālā), an excellent tract on how to become a poet:

Kurvīta sāhityavidas sakāśe śrutārjanam kāvyasamudbhavāya /
Na tārkikam kevalaśābdikam vā kuryād gurum sūktivikāsavighnam //

140. This aspect was specially stressed in numerous messges of sympathy and love that poured in after the demise of this venerable savant, from Queen to commoner. See Life and Letters of Max Müller published by his wife a year after. Vol. II, pp. 419-439. As one review aptly puts it—Max Müller made knowledge agreeable (p. 430).

141. Rig-Veda Brāhmaṇas Translated (HOS 25, 1920), pp. 61-68.

verses, hundred in all, must be ascribed 'to a time when it was desired to find recitations for the Hotṛ priest at the Rājasūya in connection with the tale of Śunaśśepa'. Regarding the pre-Brāhmaṇa state of the legend, Keith says, "In the opinion of Roth, the legend grew up into its present content during the period when the collection of the RV was in process of being carried out and it was due to it that the series of hymns in the first book to various deities was ascribed to the authorship of Śunaśśepa. He lays stress on the argument that the argument of the hymns in part depends upon the theory of authorship. On the other hand, in the view of Aufrecht, the authorships ascribed by the Anukramaṇī are complied from the notices of the Brāhmaṇas and, while this view is not altogether tenable, it would be impossible to come to any definite conclusion regarding the period of growth of the legend from the order of hymns in the Saṁhitā to the attribution to Śunaśśepa of the hymns in question." It must be remembered however that the gāthās that are incorporated in AB presuppose the existence of a constructed popular ballad which marked out not only the saving of Śunaśśepa but also his transfer into the family of Viśvāmitra. Keith is satisfied that "from (AB) vii. 17.3 to the end of the verses it runs as a perfectly simple narrative requiring only the names of the speakers to be supplied to make it clear, just as they are supplied in the epic." But both Roth and Keith do not vouchsafe to the not impossible inclusion of Hariścandra and Rohita in the gāthā version, because the Hariścandra-gāthās (AB 7.13 and 15) are "general in the extreme, and so inappropriate is the exhortation to the king to obtain a son in ch. 13 that it is addressed to Brāhmaṇs...[142] The verses are not chosen out of narrative made up apropos of Hariścandra but are mere general maxims pitted up into a story." But there must be some cause for the sacrifice of Śunaśśepa. Keith is prepared to think : "that may merely have been an ordinary tale of the performance of the human sacrifice and not a tale of the extraordinary and almost ludicrous action of Hariścandra and Nārada. Very probably the two stories of Hariścandra and his son and Śunaśśepa have been allowed to mingle, as they seem to belong to different strata of tradition, the first falling among the many stories of the sacrifice of children among the Semetic and other races, and the latter reprobating the practice of human sacrifice as a custom, perhaps one specially favoured by the Aṅgiras family, which was opposed by other Vedic families." There is no trace of hostility between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra who appear as Brahman and Hotṛ amicably at the sacrifice. There are traces of the regal character attributed to Viśvāmitra, since the young Śunaśśepa is said to succeed to the lordship of the Jahnus as well as the divine lore of the Gāthinas.[143]

Oldenberg thought that the Śunaśśepa legend as given in AB provided a good instance of the ancient ākhyānas, which are characterised as narratives in prose and verse, the former supplying suitable introductions to or amplifications of the latter. This is not impossible, for even today, the existence of old legends in oral

142. Kim nu malam kim ajinam kimu śmaśrūṇi kim tapaḥ /
Putram brahmāṇa icchadhvam sa vai loko'vadāvadaḥ //
AB 7.13.9.4.

143. PB xxi. 12.2

tradition only, many of them—with all their dialectal liberty, simplicity and homely appeal, would add support to Oldenberg's theory. They are ballads in prose and verse, transmitted with an understandable shyness and reserve among the women-folk only for the ostensible reason that men may laugh at the want of literary polish in it. We imagine, as we witness today, that these ballads have had a continuous tradition from time immemorial. However, Oldenberg was severely criticised and opposed by Keith and the theory rejected, we should dare to confess a feeling, with the latter's tārkika instincts[144] coming into full play. It is not that everything in the Ākhyāna theory is based on definite evidence and sound judgment. Yet the deep thinker as he visualised a glimmering light in the horizon pushed his way through, tripping here and there owing to darkness. Constructive criticism would strive to enlighten these dark spots and help the distant light to spread itself. Thus while reading in the ancient Saṁhitā (RV) the dialogue between Purūravas and Urvaśī, or that between Saramā and the Paṇis it is natural to think of a word of explanation here and there being necessary. The psychological processes in our own minds while understanding the statement and the reply in a dialogue find expression in words, in the Ākhyāna so-called. Such might have been provided by the ancient Vedic bards. But Oldenberg went farther than reasonable, of course in enthusiasm, to assert that such explanatory matter once formed regular part of the Veda, since disappeared or lost. Such unnecessary generalisations set the weight of suspicion on the whole edifice and Keith was too quick to let the key-stone gather cement. Taking the AB account itself as a composite narrative, we are unable to see how a status as such cannot be granted to it.[145] Whether reminiscent of the hypothetical Ākhyāna of the Veda or not, the AB narrative in itself may, with a certain amount of co-operative thinking, be regarded as an instance of the Ākhyāna. Defects are pointed out that the verses of the narrative are loosely linked with the prose and that gnomic verses found elsewhere are worked into it and all that. True, how will all that disprove the main characteristic of a more or less logically sequential mixture of prose and verse ? Besides we want to submit that, in the Ākhyāna, which, after all reflects a popular character rather than the high-flown literary unities of action, time and place, we do expect some paradoxes, anomalies and flagrant inconsistencies, which in a way—provided they are not absurd—are their peculiar and attractive features.[146] Otherwise how can tradition subsist ? How can it survive the ravages of time and clime, if people's fancy did not feed it specially at a time when writing was a problem and printing unknown ? This may be another extreme, but a consideration along the line is necessary while appreciating ancient literary traditions which, may it be remembered, are ever more of the people than of the scholar.

144. Keith, JRAS 1911, pp. 979-1009.

145. Vedic literary tradition actually designates it an ākhyāna, in the sense of a short story complete in itself. Oldenberg only went to the length of defining it and also superimposing its existence as part of the Saṁhitā.

146. Witness for instance the popular version of the Śunaśśepa legend in the Devī Bhāgavata or even the more polished yet impossible innovations of the Brahma. The process of change is inevitable.

Therefore there is still room enough for Oldenbergs while Keiths are absolutely needed to keep the 'balance of power'!

The Legend of Śunaśśepa has roused considerable interest among scholars, as revealing the prevalence of human sacrifice in Ancient India. Such a view is not unreasonable, for Śunaśśepa was actually bound to the stakes. He was saved, no doubt, by divine grace but the canons do not make provision for that. Human sacrifice under the name puruṣa-medha is prescribed by the Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra (16.10 f.) and the Vaitana (37.10 ff.). An elaborate ceremony has developed in relation to it, in which, according to the Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā (30) as many as 184 persons of different denominations and professions have to be offered[147] as sacrifice. It is incredible on the face of it that such a ritual had ever had any practical demonstration. The consensus of opinion is that this human sacrifice was only a theoretical provision in the Sūtras, occasioned, as Keith opines, to remove the anomaly in the omission of man from the list of victims. The use of a man and four other victims is stated as an offering at the piling of the great fire altar. This usage is not actually laid down by any Brāhmaṇa, the most contemplated is the use of the head of a man who has been slain by lightning or by an arrow shot, not a victim killed for the purpose, and normally the head of a goat seems to have sufficed. But it is clearly no sacrifice at all.[148]

There is the other world-wide custom of slaying a human being to act as the guardian of the foundations of a building. This is an unwritten and stealthy practice, if at all. It is no human sacrifice in the sense put forth by the Śrauta Sūtras.

Human sacrifice was not uncommon in Greece as we hear stories to the effect. It is revealed that it was widely practised in the age of the Indus Valley Civilisation.[149] Stray incidents are also reported from the Bible.[150] The theory of sacrificing or giving up what is our best or what we love most, in order to please the Almighty Creator, is not without force; it has some appeal to the cultivated mind and much more so to the credulous. The principle of surrender reaches its zenith when we hear a story that Rāvaṇa offered his head to please Śiva, or that Viṣṇu himself, finding a lotus less than a thousand while he worshipped the same God, without hesitation, pulled out his eye and offered at His feet. This kind of immolation has some justification, when it is viewed in a truly philosophic way. But that will not suit the world. The moment it is turned into a cult, it becomes barbarous, hence the univerasl abhorrence of it. One other point. If ever human sacrifice was contemplated and practised in order to please the Gods, well, the same Gods have recompensed the loss ten-fold. Even in the fables, there is no sacrifice without such compensation which would repair the loss completely. For the

147. Winternitz HIL p.174.

148. Keith RPV, pp. 347-348. Veda of the Black Yajus School Translated (HOS 18 and 19), pp. cxxxvii-cxl.

149. A. P. Karmarkar, Human Sacrifice in Proto-India, ABORI 25 (1944), pp. 112-113.

150. Max Müller in ASL, p. 419.

sake of argument, Rāvaṇa sacrificed the one head but got ten in return and became master of the three worlds. Even so Viṣṇu; the eye was at once restored, and with it he became Supreme Lord of the three worlds. Śunaśśepa was sacrificed for all intents and purposes, the result was—Gods were pleased, Śunaśśepa himself was granted long life and Hariścandra was freed from illness. But when such principles and acts of subtlety and high thinking were canonised, the inevitable result would be brutal executions at dead of night, in mid-forest and amidst ghastly surroundings. Therefore quite early in the history of Man, counteraction expressed itself and to the best of our belief, the Śunaśśepa sacrifice is an instance of an effective protest against such a system, if it ever existed. It is colourfully represented by some that the native dwellers of India before the Aryan advent indulged in it and the Aryans by various means exerted a healthy influence upon them to give up such horrible customs.

X

ON THE NAME ŚUNAŚŚEPA

Śunaśśepa 'dog-tailed' (śuna iva śepo asya), is rather a funny name[151] for a Ṛṣi, as he is known to be. He is one of the celebrated Centurion Seers (Śatarcins) of the first maṇḍala of RV. He is complimented also as a reputed poet, born in the family of the Aṅgirasas (Āṅgiraso janmanā'syājīgartiś śrutaḥ kaviḥ) and yet possessing such an unpoetic name, sets one to think about it. The uncomplimentary if not despicable nature of it has been noticed by every scholar. Some have felt it not inappropriate with his indigent and, judging from later conduct, barbarous parentage.[152] An opinion has been expressed also that though the name relates to a dog and all that, in the time of the Ṛgveda it did not matter as the dog was not considered a despicable beast at all.[153] Some kind of endearment was felt or intended when, for instance, Ṛcīka's wife, the mother of Śunaśśepa said

Avikreyam sutam jyeṣṭham Bhagavān āha Bhārgavaḥ /
Mamāpi dayitam viddhi kaniṣṭham Śunakam prabho //[154]

All the same, the queerness of the name and much more, the queerness of its being one of a synonymous series—Śunaḥpuccha, Śunaśśepa and Śunolāṅgūla—are undeniable. The names are truly artificial; they sound like nick-names.

That these names, as a series, are spurious is countenanced by the Harivaṁśa. While tracing the genealogy of Jamadagni and Viśvāmitra, there was a problem for

151. Amusing names are perhaps the feature of all times and all nations. Compare—Bull, Boot(e), Black, Burns, Baldwin, Butcher, Stone, Dry-den, Piggot, Swineburn etc., corresponding in Kannaḍa—Kempa, Kariya, Guṇḍa, Hucca, Kāḷa, surnames like Teṅginakai or Meṇasinakai etc. Contrast the practice of gods' names only employed by some people, as a rule.

152. *cf.* Eggeling—SBE XLIV, p. xxxiv et seq., Winternitz HIL 1.218 n. A kind of censure is reflected in the retention of the genitive (aluk) in those names. *cf.* Pāṇini 6.3.21—"Ṣaṣṭhyā ākrośe" Vārtika 4 thereon, Śepapucchalāṅgūleṣu śunaḥ saṁjñāyām.

153. Hopkins—AmJPh. XV 'The Dog in the Rig-Veda' pp. 154-63 (1894).

154. Rām. 1.61.17-18. The suffix *ka* signifies affection as in putraka, bālaka etc., note particularly the diminutive Śunaka from Śunolāṅgūla.

'Vyāsa'. Jamadagni was the son of Ṛcīka by Satyavatī daughter of king Gādhi. Ṛcīka chose to marry the princess whom he loved dearly; and being pleased with her, prepared the holy *caru* for the sake of progeny. She partook of it and gave birth to Jamadagni. But there was another legend current, relating to a Ṛcīka who had three sons, the Śuna-brothers, the middle one being Śunaśśepa. So the undaunted author of the Harivaṁśa reconciled the divergence by grafting two of these, as brothers of Jamadagni, the status of the middle one being vouchsafed for Śunaśśepa. This brotherhood *viz.*, Jamadagni, Śunaśśepa and Śunaḥpuccha became more ludicrous than the original combination. In these circumstances, our supposition that there should have been two Ṛcīkas, stated in the foregoing pages, appears plausible.

That apart, it is sufficiently reasonable to think that the names of Śunaḥpuccha and Śunolāṅgūla are purely imaginary. These two are mentioned for the first time in AB and, only Sānkh SS, of so many works of Vedic Literature, repeats the names. Later, the Vārttika-kāra conceived a special vārtika comprehending only these three names, as an addendum to the sūtra "Ṣaṣṭhyā ākrośe" (6.3.21, SK. 981). That gave these mythical personalities a stamp of reality. Nevertheless, the purpose of the puccha and lāṅgūla has been no more than to provide the madhyama status to Śunaśśepa. The concept of the middle one, incidentally, itself deserves to be questioned on two grounds at least. Firstly it is, psychologically, an unsound and unnatural phenomenon; for, all children are the same to the parents. The distinction of the eldest and the youngest is an almost mischievous precept promulgated by the old text. Tradition fostered it, though in general, it has never been given to mankind to practise it. Secondly, it has no basis in the Saṁhitā, nor corroboration in any other work of the Vedic period which could be contemporaneous with it.

Now to the name Śunaśśepa itself. It occurs in the Saṁhitā thrice as already pointed out (RV 1.24.12,13; 5.2.7). Other expressions-in the Veda with Śuna prefixed are Śunápṛṣṭha,[155] Śunáhotra,[156] Śúnāsīra,[157] Śúneṣita.[158] The word śuna itself occurs twelve times,[159] in two forms śúnaḥ (thrice) and śunám (nine times). The Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa mentions a Śunaskarṇa.[160]

155. 7.80.1.

156. 2.18.6; 41.14; 17.

157. 4.57.5; 8. The Nighaṇṭu mentions the word with a double accent as a devatā-dvandva—Śunásīrā (Nigh. 5.3.34). But in the Saṁhitā, the word is intitially accented—Śúnāsīra.

158. 8.46.28.

159. Śunaḥ 1.182.4; 4.18.13; 8.55.3.
Śunám 1.117.18; 3.30.22; 4.3.11; 57.4⁵; 8⁴; 6.16.4; 10.102.8; 126.7; 160.5. The superimposed figures denote the number of times the word occurs in the same stanza. For the purpose of counting the number of occurrences the whole stanza is taken as one.

160. TB 17.12.6 Śunaskarṇa is the name of a king (mentioned is BŚS also), son of Śibi or of Baṣkiha who performed a certain rite, the Sarvasāra, and so died without disease. VI 2 p. 886. TāB, also called Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa is translated into English by Caland (ASB publication 1931).

Śunápṛṣṭha is used as an adjective meaning 'possessed of fine backs' (śobhana-pṛṣṭha); so also Śúneṣita (analysed as śúnā-iṣita) meaning 'drawn or carried along by the dog.'

Śúnāsīra signifies a dual divinity namely Indra-Vāyu. According to Yāska (Nir. IX.40),[161] it is Vāyu and Āditya. Later, the expression signifies two agricultural deities, the personifications probably of 'the share and the plough', as Roth thinks.[162]

Śunáhotra is the name of a Vedic Ṛṣi, father of Gṛtsamada who is the Seer of the second Maṇḍala. Thrice it has appeared in RV and in loc. pl. only—śunáhotreṣu. Once interpreted as referring to sacrificial vessels of that designation and twice as referring to the Śunahotras, the members of the Śunahotra family.[163]

Though he does not figure in the Vedic text, we are quite familiar with the versatile Śaunaka under which name Gṛtsamada is said to be known after he changed over from the Aṅgiras to the Bhṛgu family. In the Bhṛgu family he was adopted as the son of Śunaka.[164] It is however significant that, in the hymns he saw, he styles himself as a Śunahotra.

Now the word śunám[165] in the Veda is one of 20 names of sukha (happiness), sometimes used adverbially also meaning 'happily' (Nigh 3.6.11). Thus the expressions, Śunahotra (one who sacrifices for the sake of happiness), Śunapṛṣṭha (the horse which possesses happy, pleasurable, therefore fine backs), Śunaka (the happy man) and Śaunaka (son of the happy man)—all are of good import. The adjective Śūneṣita 'drawn by the dog,' (śunā-iṣita) is in that sense, an instance of the aluk-samāsa with the instrumental suffix not lost. Thus we see, so far as the names of persons in the Vedic range are concerned the first member śuna has consistently conveyed good sense.

Why should it be different in the case of Śúnaśśépa? The pada text significantly enough does not analyse the word but shows the double accent, which is explained according to Pāṇini 6.2.140—Ubhe vanaspatyādiṣu yugapat (SK 3871).[166] The first member here is śunaḥ which is, apparently, genitive singular

161. Śuno Vāyuḥ śu etyantarikṣe sīra ādityaḥ saraṇāt (Nir. IX. 40).

162. VI, II, p. 386.

163. Sukhena hūyate somo yair iti śunahotrāḥ pātraviśeṣāḥ—Sāyaṇa on RV 2.18.6. Śunahotreṣu Gṛtsamadeṣu asmāsu (2.41.14, 17). Preface to Second Maṇḍala—Maṇḍaladraṣṭā Gṛtsamada ṛṣiḥ / Sa ca pūrvam Āṅgirasakule Śunahotrasya putraḥ san yajñakāle asurair gṛhīta Indreṇa mocitaḥ / Paścāt tadvacanenaiva Bhṛgukule Śunaka-putro Gṛtsamadanāmā abhūt. Tathā cānukramaṇikā—Ya Āṅgirasaś Śaunahotro bhūtvā bhārgavaś Śaunako'bhavat sa Gṛtsamado divitīyam maṇḍalam apaśyad iti / Tathā tasyaiva Śaunakasya vacanam Ṛṣyanukramaṇe—
Tvam Agna iti Gṛtsamadaś Śaunako Bhṛgutām gataḥ /
Śaunahotraḥ prakṛtyā tu ya Āṅgirasa ucyate //

164. Ibid.

165. Dr. A. Venkatasubbiah in his word study argues that śunam "signifies originally priya = dear, agreeable etc., and secondarily, svīya or own. The meaning sukha assigned to it by the author of the Nighaṇṭu seems to be but an approximate equivalent of the original priya, like all approximations, not quite accurate." pp. 61-66 IA. LVI (1927). Dr. A. V. has published his essays in book form entitled "Vedic Studies," published at Devaprāsāda, Myosre.

166. Vanaspati Bṛhaspati Śacīpati Tanūnapāt Narāśamsaḥ
Śunaśśepaḥ Śaṇḍāmarkau Tṛṣṇāvarūtrī Lambāviśvavayasau Marmṛtyuḥ iti vanaspatyādiḥ. See also VG, p. 96.

of śvan, 'dog'. It is a case, again, like śúnā-iṣita, for the aluk. But as true Vedic application demands, we should explore whether śunaḥ in this compound cannot mean or relate to happiness. In our opinion it can.

Before proceeding to elucidate this point, it would be well to discuss the other difficult member, śepa. This word is mentioned in the Nighaṇṭu along with Vaitasáḥ among 26 duets of names.[167] The meaning is not given.[168] The Nirukta explāins as follows : " Sepo Vaitasa iti pumsprajananasya / Śepaś śapateḥ spṛśatikarmaṇo vaitaso vitastam bhavati //"—Śepa and vaitasa are names of man's genital organ ; śepa from śap to touch and vaitasa because it is contracted.[169] The etymology is not supported by proper authority. Yāska was full of fancy, no doubt, but when he is likely to mislead, we have to look elsewhere. According to Uṇādi, śepa is derived from √ śī to lie down or sleep, II A with the suffixes puṭ and asun, which yields the form śepas. But the word ending in a is also found in usage as in 'prahárāma śépam'[170]

Śepa is associated with śipi in RV 7.100. 5-6 meaning raśmi (ray) as explained by Yāska. Reminiscent of this, śepa must mean brightness or lustre:

Prá tát te adyá śipiviṣṭa nā́ma
Aryáḥ śamsāmi vayúnāni vidvā́n /
Táṁ tvā gṛṇāmi tavásam átavyān
Kṣáyantam asyá rájasaḥ parāké //
Kím ít te viṣṇo paricákṣyam bhūt
Prá yád vavakṣé śipiviṣṭó asmi /
Mā́ várpo asmád ápa gūha etát
Yád anyárūpaḥ samithé babhū́tha //[171]

Here śipiviṣṭa is used in two senses : (1) uncovered like the membrum virile (2) enveloped by rays.[172] Now unless urged by the authority of these ancient

167. ...śépaḥ/ vaitasáḥ / ...iti ṣaḍvimśatir dvisá uttarāṇi nāmāni / Nigh. 3.29.

168. Dr. S. K. Belvalkar thinks that this and the subsequent section of Ch. III of the Nighaṇṭu are, possibly, additions by a later hand. Being mere lists of words, the supposition is that, like the words (aikapadikas) of Ch. IV, they are also 'anavagatasamskāra' words, whose make-up, significance etc. are not known. We submit that sections 29 and 30 of Ch. III may just be two lists of words which were of the nature of anavagatasamskāra appended by the first compilers themselves. Did not the original compilers of the Nighaṇṭu (say of the first three chapters) meet with difficult words at all in the Veda ? —Reference AIOC II (Calcutta) S. K. Belvalkar on the Literary Strata of the Ṛgveda.

169. Nir. 3.21. Yásyām uśántaḥ prahárāma śépam (RV 10.85.37) is quoted as example. Vaitaso vitastam upakṣīṇam bhavati prāganusmaraṇāt striyāḥ—Durga.

170. Śīṅ svapne. Vṛṅśīṅbhyām rūpasvāṅgayoḥ puṭ ca / (Uṇ 640) and Sarvadhātubhyaḥ asun / (Uṇ 628). Hence Śepas. Yadyapi śepaśśabdaḥ sakārāntaḥ gaurliṅgam cihnaśepasoḥ ityamara-prayogāt, tathāpi śīṅo nipātanād auṇādike papratyaye akārāntopyastyeva /

171. Tr. " Resplendent Viṣṇu, I, the master of the offering, knowing the objects that are to be known, glorify today thy name : I, who am feeble, praise thee who art powerful, dwelling in a remote region of this world.

What is to be proclaimed, O Viṣṇu, of thee, when thou sayest, I am śipiviṣṭa ? Conceal not, from us, thy real form, although thou hast engaged under a different form in battle."—Wilson.

172. Nir. 5.7-8. " Śipiviṣṭo viṣṇur iti Viṣṇor dve nāmanī bhavataḥ / Kutsitārthīyam bhavatītyaupamanyavaḥ " / Śepa iva nirveṣṭiteḥ (kutsitārthe) / Śipibhī raśmibhir āviṣṭaḥ iti vā /

propounders of Vedic thought like Yāska and Aupamanyava, there is nothing by way of internal evidence in the verses just quoted to support the *kutsitārtha*, the low sense. It is not infrequent that some good words are abused or used in a euphemistic way to denote some indecent things in human life ; the psychology is one of hearty aversion to give utterance to obscene things, *e.g.* the use of the word marma and pradhāna, the dialectal sense of which cannot even enter the lexicons. In the same manner it is not unlikely that an excellent word like Śipi meaning ray was abused. What harm if we restore it to its original purity and understand by śepa (śipir eva śepaḥ) a sense like ray, lustre, brilliance etc. ? The point is that Śipi or śepa does not directly mean man's genital organ. It can mean other things also, specially because the older work Nighaṇṭu has abstained from specifying its meaning.

There is some support that we can find from other classical languages.[173] Compare Latin cipus, cippus and its Gk. analogue SKOIPOS, which mean a pile, post, pillar, staff, bar, etc. In the light of this, the original significance of śepa may be taken as a pillar or a post. And, if the first member in Śunaśśepa can be understood in the sense of sukha, happiness, the whole name yields a pleasant sense, *viz.* a pillar of happiness—a sense which is in perfect keeping with the great idea of Deliverance for which Śunaśśepa is all the time remembered.

This meaning is possible if the compound could be construed as a tatpuruṣa : śunasya (sukhasya) śepaḥ (stambhaḥ) Śunaśśepaḥ. How to account for the sibilant in between : it ought to be Śunaśepaḥ ? This is easily accounted by Pāṇini 6.1.157 (Sk. 1073)—Pāraskaraprabhṛtīni ca samjñāyām / which the Siddhānta Kaumudī expands : etāni sasuṭkāni nipātyante nāmni / pāraskaraḥ / kiṣkindhā / tad bṛhatoḥ etc. / coradevatayor iti samudāyopādhiḥ / taskaraḥ / Bṛhaspatiḥ / ...Vanaspatiḥ / ityādi / ākṛtigaṇoyam /

The Tattvabodhinī adds, with the flavour of a *double-entendre*,—ākṛtigaṇoyamiti / Tena śatāt parāṇi—paraśśatāni kāryāṇītyādi siddham /, suggesting that hundreds of such forms can be made, the word paraśśata itself being an example !

Thus the aphorism and its vārtikas declare that the instances are not limited and that on their analogy many others in usage can be comprehended. Moreover, Vanaspati (and hence Vanaspatyādi) is also added as coming within the purview of this rule. Śunaśśepa is definitely included in the Vanaspatigaṇa[174] which, while taking the double accent which is a privilege peculiar to its own group, shares other grammatical incidences also, the suḍāgama in this case. Apart from the technical rule, it is needless to stress the phonetic rationale in the expression Śunaśśepa, where the sibilant helps to step up the pronunciation from the sonant to the surd. The argumentation reaches a fine point indeed, which may, in a way, be considered unnecessary because the human element in language sometimes defies

173. K. F. Johansson's note on śepa. Indische Miszellen, IF 8.218.
174. Supra Note 166.

all rule ; well, in fact it originates the rules and is unscrupulous enough to force exceptions also. The Tattvabodhinī makes a very pertinent statement under the Pāraskara-Sūtra :

> Pāram karoti pāraskaraḥ, kimapi dhatte kiṣkindhā, kim kim dadhāti vā / Vastutastu rūḍhiśabdā etc kathañcid vyutpādyanta iti avayavārthc nāgrahaḥ kāryaḥ /[175]

The words are there in language ; attempts will be made to analyse and understand them ; there is no point in being fastidious. Thus the word Śunaśśepa can be analysed as a tatpuruṣa-samāsa : śunasya śepaḥ, being entitled to the suḍāgama as a member of the Vanaspati group which in turn is influenced by the Pāraskara rule.

This discussion encourages us to think that the padapāṭha of Śunaśśepa is faulty and requires to be emended, from Śúnaḥ-śépaḥ to Śuná-śépaḥ. This involves us in a difficulty relating to the accent of the first member. The rule, Ubhe vanaspatyādiṣu yugapat,[176] prescribes to the two members their own accent (ubhayapadaprakṛtisvaratva). According to this, śuna as noun meaning happiness takes the prātipadika-svara[177] *i.e.* accent on the final and is so marked in the Nighaṇṭu—Śunám. But the text, has śúnaḥ, the initial accent pointing to the great likelihood of its being, even originally, the gen. sing. of śvan, substantive ; for in śúnaḥ, the genitive, being a sup-pratyaya, is unaccented ;[178] the accent remains on the stem.

Whereas we have sufficient ground to put up a case for the emendation of the pada-text, the emendation of the accent thereof is a natural corollary : Śuná-śépaḥ : Śunáśśépaḥ. Following the tendency of the scholiast, it is not difficult to argue for the initial accent of śuna even as a substantive. The prātipadika-svara is taken advantage of, usually, when the word defies derivation according to Śākaṭāyana (the Uṇādi-sūtras). Indeed this exercise is a somewhat thankless job because in great many cases the root-meaning hardly helps the semantic understanding of the word. All the same it speaks of the profound linguistic speculations of the ancient grammarians to have evolved a grammatical machinery which can dissect the word into its very elements. Therefore derive śunam from√śun, to go, VI P.[179] Add the suffix asun provided by " Sarvadhātubhyaḥ asun " (Uṇ. 628) ; we get the form śúnas which has the initial accent,[180] meaning, movement,

175. The first sentence is an epitome of the com., the second is a quotation. See SK. with Tattvabodhini etc. (Nirṇayasāgar, Bombay 1942), p. 221 (Sk. 1073).

176. Sk. 3871 (P. VI.2.40)

177. Phiṭ I 1 following Sk. 3704. " Phiṣonta udāttaḥ "

178. Sk. 3706 (P III 1.4) " anudāttau suppitau."

179. Dhā. 1423 Śuna gatau (tu. pa.se) (Sk. NS edn. p. 410). Dhā 1337 acc. BORI (Chitrav-Pāṭhak). What a wide difference in the enumeration of the roots, almost to a hundred. Such differences are found in the Aṣṭādhyāyī and the Siddhānta Kaumudī also from publication to publication. A standard edition of all these works which are indispensable to every scholar is a great desideratum.

180. SK. 3683 (P. VI 1.197) ñnityādir nityam.

progress, prosperity, happiness. Further, Śúnasaḥ śepaḥ Śúnaśśépaḥ, which explanation has not got to invoke the suḍāgama at all ![181] Why not prefer this explanation which agrees with the given accent of the Vedic Text? It is for the simple reason that a certain Vedic tradition had already a word like śunám meaning happiness and on the analogy of other Vedic words like Bṛhaspati, Śúnaśśépa also could be more authoritatively explained.

There is a further important clue in this logical procedure which led us to venture on an emendation of the Pada-text and through that—may the Gods forgive !—on a slight change of accent in the Saṁhitā also. Here is a basis for some conjecture which is in no way idle. That we have interfered with the authenticity or exactitude of the pada-pāṭha need cause no surprise. The pada-pāṭha is not infallible, as shown long ago by Yāska himself—

(*a*) Commenting on RV 5.39.1. (yádindra citra mehánāsti) Yāska says—Yad Indra citram cāyanīyam mamhanīyam dhanam asti / Yan ma iha nāstīti vā trīṇi madhyamāni padāni /[182] Durga, in support, adds :—Bahvṛcānām mehanā ityekam padam / Chandogānām trīṇyetāni padāni " ma iha na " iti / The divergence of the Pada and Saṁhitā pāṭhas is thus borne out by the evidence of the Sāmaveda. Durga further characterises this " mehanā " as one of the anavagatas[183] ' not understood ', of the vibhāgānavagata type *i.e.* words whose division is not definitely known.

(*b*) The svarānavagata, an expression which raises difficulty of accent, has resulted in an erroneous pada-pāṭha *e.g.* in ' Vánc ná vāyó nyadhāyi cākán '[184] RV 10.29.1. Commenting on this, Yāska says :—Vana iva vāyo veḥ putraś cāyanniti vā kāmayamāna iti vā / veti ca ya iti ca cakāra Śākalyaḥ / Udāttam tvevam ākhyātam abhaviṣyat asusamāptaś cārthaḥ /—Śākalya has analysed vāyaḥ into vā and yaḥ : then the finite verb would have had the accent[185] and the sense would have been incomplete.

(*c*) We have now added the case of Śúnaśśépa. It is our belief that the story of Śúnaśśépa, as given in AB, was current with its component parts developed, by the time Śākalya formulated the pada-pāṭha; and that Śākalya, while he pieced together the Saṁhitā and provided the division into words (śakala = bits), very probably exercised the liberties of an editor and exponent. This circumstance

181. Śunas and Śunam may both be admissible like śepas and śepa as adverted to above. Words that end in -a as well as -s are not uncommon, *e.g.* nabham, nabhas ; tapam, tapas ; saham, sahas ; maham, mahas ; tamam, tamas ; rajam, rajas.—from Dvirūpa-kośa quoted by Tattvabodhinī on Uṇ. 628 (p. 560 Sk. NS Edn. 1942).

182. Nir. IV 4. (p. 360 BSS Vol. I).

183. The anavagatasamskāras are of ten kinds. That is, the words offer difficulties in the way of understanding a text in ten ways. Padajāti-abhidheya-svara-samskāra-guṇa-vibhāga-krama-vikṣepa-adhyāhāra-vyavadhānāni / Teṣu 'cābhidheyam apekṣya nirvacanam kartavyam / See pp. 357-358 Nirukta-Bhadkamkar—I. BSS.

184. Nir. VI 28. See pp. 690, 693, Bhadkamkar I (BSS).

185. P. VIII 1,66 (Sk. 3970) Yadvṛttānnityam. Durga has fully explained the discrepancy of the pada-pāṭha. " Etasmin nigame padavibhāgagataḥ kaścid vicārosti tam āha bhāṣyakāraḥ etc. etc. " p. 698.

lends support to the view that RV 1.24.12-13 are a later interpolation, probably by Śākalya, which hypothesis we submitted in the early part of this essay. RV 5.2.6 " Śúnáś cicchépam " must be regarded as an anavagatasamskāra of the vikṣepānavagata type *i.e.* words whose separation into parts becomes unintelligible.[186]

(*d*) Many a verse from the Ṛgveda we find repeated in the other Saṁhitās. In this process, many *variae lectiones* will reveal themselves. In dealing with RV 3.31.6, in the previous chapter, we recorded a number of v.l.[187] between RV, MS and TB. Some v.l. are found in AV also (*cf.* RV 4.57.8 with AV 3.17.5, for instance). This fact is cited just to reconcile oneself to the fact that the most wonderfully accurate transmission of the Vedic texts withal, a few variations or even pitfalls here and there—utterly negligible, indeed, in proportion to the huge mass of literature—may be discovered ; it may not be sin to know them ! Even so with the pada-pāṭha.

One more point before concluding this investigation. Śunaśśepa is also written with aspiration as Śunaśśepha. This is a post-Vedic phonetic change only, perhaps contributed by the Gauḍa country. We find the pha in Gorresio's text of Rām. Wilson has adopted that spelling in his translation of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (quarto) and opines that is the ' usually written form,'[188] which statement reminds us of his long stay in Calcutta. The English translations of Purāṇic texts from Bengal adopt the pha while the Vedic texts of the BI series stick to the original form, pa. Yet, some etymological reflection may not be undue. Śepha is reminiscent of Śipha or Śiphā, just as Śepa is of Śipi. Śiphā, or Śiphā-kanda according to Amarasimha, means fibre, stalk, or fibrous root.[189] Monier Williams records both m. and f. forms of the word, meaning fibrous root or root in general. Even this dialectal change helps the understanding of śepha in a good sense : thus śunasya sukhasya śepho mūlam, ' the root of happiness '. Śunaśśepha of the story became that to the Aryan folk after the great Deliverance.

The orthography of Śunaśśepa requires mention. It is most commonly written as Śunaḥśepa ; in devanāgarī script also, with a *visarga* after Śuna. If this practice is meant to remind ourselves of the *aluk*, it is indeed scholarly precision. In our humble opinion, the phonetic delicacy is thereby disregarded ; try to pronounce as it is written—writing, we hope, is meant to follow pronuciation ; then, we see the rigidity of the canon or of our understanding thereof. Even granting the aluk, what precludes the visarga from colaescing with the succeeding sibilant ? Double ś is not at all hard to pronounce being a breathed sound ; it only requires

186. See Durga on p. 358 already cited. *e.g.* " dyāvā naḥ pṛthīvī" iti yathā *cf.* BD 2.115 which recommends the order of words according to their sense—' arthād āsīt kramo yathā,' giving a third example narā vā śamsam. *Cf.* RV Pr. 2.43.

187. Notes 18, 22 and 24.

188. Note on RV 1.24 in his translation of RV Vol. I, p. 59 of the original edition. Moreover, he persists in writing the word as sakārānta, Śunaḥśepas, which is a fad similar to his Viśwadevas, not Viśvedevas ! Such instances are not uncommon among scholars in general.

189. Karahāṭaś śiphākandaḥ kiñjalkaḥ kesaro'striyām /

a little more breath ! On the other hand, imagine the convulsions in the resonance chamber when we pronounce the visarga followed by the first sibilant ś, the two to be pronounced as distinct sounds. It is to avoid this strain on the vocal organs that rules like the Pāraskara one are conceived. It will be equally just to respect 'Pāraskaraprabhṛtīni' (Sk. 1073) in this case; and the famous maxim about coalescence :

Samhitaikapade nityā nityā dhātūpasargayoḥ /
nityā samāse vākye tu sā vivakṣām apekṣate //

Rv Prātiśākhya clinches the whole issue when it says that the visarga before a breathed conjunct consonant is wrong and definitely gives the correct form as Śunaśśepa [saṁyogāder ūṣmaṇaḥ pūrvam āhur visarjanīyam adhikam svaropadhāt/[33]]

The current orthography of words like Śaṁkara and alaṁkāra urges comment, but we must desist out of deference to the revered teachers. Liberty is nobody's monopoly, yet it is everybody's first claim!

To sum up :

(*a*) The ugliness of the name Śunaśśepa and of the antecedents of his personality are a later fancy, dating, possibly, even from the time of the pada-pāṭha. Its original significance points to Śunaśśepa being a 'pillar of happiness.'[190]

(*b*) The pada-pāṭha of the word Śúnaśśépaḥ, given as Śúnaḥśépaḥ, reminding us of the aluksamāsa and also of the first member being the gen. sing. of Śvan, is defective. An emendation thereof as Śúna-śépaḥ is not illogical.[190a]

(*c*) With a little shifting of the accent, the emendation will be better as Śunáśśépaḥ in the saṁhitā-pāṭha and Śuná-śépaḥ in the pada.

(*d*) The pada-pāṭha is not infallible as proved by the ancient exponent of the Veda, Yāska, whose criticism of its author Śākalya is marked by a peculiar candour, which warrants a supposition that the pada-kāra was not far anterior of the Nirukta-kāra.

(*e*) The word Śunaśśepa came to have an aspiration at the end (Śunaśśepha), as a dialectal peculiarity, found in the regions of Bengal.

(*f*) The orthography of the word Śunaśśepa requires proper appreciation. Śunaśśepa is *the correct form*, whereas Śunaḥśepa is wrong, unscientific and pretentious.

190. Compare the expression. He is a tower of strength.

190a RV Prāti. XIV 33 and 36. ed. and trans. by Dr. Mangal Deva Sastri in 3 vols. Vols. II and III are published (Allahabad and Lahore) 1931, 1937. *Cf.* Uvaṭa's explanation of sūtra 33. Svaropadhāt saṁyogāder ūṣmaṇah pūrvam adhikam visarjanīyam āhuḥ / sa doṣo varjyaḥ / Again on 36. Śunaśśepaḥ, Niṣṣapī etc. ityete'vikramā bhavanti / Eteṣu vikramo visarjanīyaḥ sa doṣo varjyaḥ / Śunaśśepaḥ (RV I 24.12) etc.

XI

SUMMARY

1. The story of Śunaśśepa's deliverance[191] is a Vedic fact. According to one Seer, Śunaśśepa was saved from a thousand-fold stake by Agni (RV 5.2.7) while another singer paises Varuṇa for having freed him from his bonds (1.24.12,13). Śunaśśepa himself is one among the centurion seers (śatarcins : seers of hundred verses) to whom is attributed the revelation of the first maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda.

2. The other Saṁhitās know him as seized by Varuṇa (varuṇa-gṛhīta) and then freed on praising him with RV 1.24.15 (Úduttamáṁ), which is a very favourite prayer to Varuṇa, in almost all the Saṁhitās, that he might graciously release the worshipper from his threefold pāśa, at the head, in the middle and at the bottom. This stanza in later times inspired a philosophic interpretation, that it was an appeal for freedom from worldly ties.

3. It is the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (7.13-18) that spins a complete narrative of the legend. It is repeated, with slight difference only, by the Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra. The central theme of Śunaśśepa's escape from sacrificial immolation has been linked at the beginning and at the end to two other episodes. The introductory link is provided by Hariścandra and his son Rohita whose entanglement with God Varuṇa brings about the main event of sacrificing Śunaśśepa. The concluding link is provided by Viśvāmitra, the universal friend, to whose family Śunaśśepa after release is adopted as the eldest son inheriting both regal authority and divine lore from the adoptive father. The narrative is a mixture of the Brāhmaṇic prose and the popular gāthā. It has been supposed that the legend perhaps existed in the form of a ballad even before AB.

4. Works like the Sarvānukramṇī which are but ancillaries to the Veda repeat the story as given in AB. The famous commentators, Ṣaḍguruśiṣya and Sāyaṇa and their ditto Dyā Dviveda scrupulously follow AB and show no influence of the other version of the story, though it was positively current in their times.

5. In later literature, the two epics, the Harivaṁśa and Vāyu Purāṇa present a different version of the story, which is believed to reflect the popular account of it. The Brāhma, Bhāgavata and Devī Bhāgavata repeat the Aitareya, herein called the orthodox version, with slight innovations here and there which reflect the local taste and temperament in their respective ages.

6. The Legend of Śunaśśepa provides good scope for sociological study in successive stages. The eager theorist can suspect cannibalism and human sacrifice once upon a time. Sale of children and eating dog's flesh are indications of the

191. It was stated above that the Legend of Śunaśśepa was prescribed to be recited at the Coronation ceremony of Kings. W. H. Robinson states that this corresponds to the precise point where a copy of the Holy Bible is presented by Bishops to the British Sovereigns when crowned at Westminster. (See 'The Golden Legend of India or the story of India's god-given Cynosure', by W. H. Robinson, Luzac & Co., London, 1911).

extent to which poverty could drive the people. Manu absolves the ancient ṛṣis of the taint of crime nevertheless.[192] The theory of the prevalence of human sacrifice is rejected by almost all scholars. It is provided for in some sociological texts to give the stamp of perfection to the theoretical structure of sacrifice. The Śunaśśepa Legend is a protest against human sacrifice which the Aryans found prevalent in the land, when they arrived from the north-western regions. The Indus Valley experts have unearthed evidence to think that human sacrifice prevailed as a custom in the age envisaged by the finds.

7. A study of the name Śunaśśepa has been presented in detail in an attempt to inquire whether the name was, in the time of RV, of an uncomplimentary significance. It has been possible to establish that it could have signified worthily, a "pillar of happiness" in consonance with the great idea of Deliverance for which Śunaśśepa's name is immortalised. Śunaḥpuccha and Śunolāṅgūla are spurious names, and the concept of the 'middle one,' to propound which only these names were conceived, is psychologically unsound and, what is more, prone to inculcate unethical ideas into credulous minds. Incidentlly, the infallibility of the padapāṭha and its hoary antiquity within the Vedic Age have become matters of doubt. Human nature being the same always, the sacred texts seem to be no exception to the falterings of transmission through the holiest agencies of old, the Ṛṣis and the Ācāryas.

192. Ajīgartas sutam hantum upāsarpad bubhukṣitaḥ /
na cālipyata pāpena kṣutpratīkāram ācaran // (MS 10.105)

CHAPTER III

VASIṢṬHA AND VIŚVĀMITRA

Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are among the foremost seers of the Ṛgveda. They are regarded as having seen entire Maṇḍalas (maṇḍaladraṣṭāraḥ), the seventh (104 hymns) and the third (62 hymns) respectively. There have been innumerable references to the two sages in Sanskrit Literature, ancient and modern. Much has been written also about them by Orientalists of the past and present century. Nothing new and sensational can be unearthed now. The purpose of this study is mainly to unravel the problem of the ancient feud between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra and understand their mutual relationship in its true perspective. Let us first know what our most ancient authority, the Ṛgveda, has to say about them, comment and criticism being put off to a later section of the chapter. For the sake of convenience, we just invert the order and deal with Viśvāmitra first. In the Ṛgvedic compilation, Viśvāmitra's is the earlier maṇḍala. It is but accidental, carrying absolutely no significance of relative superiority. It is not a case for the maxim 'abhyarhitam pūrvam'!

I

Ṛgveda

(A) VIŚVĀMITRA—

There are eight contexts in RV in which the name of Viśvāmitra occurs[1] :—curiously, all grammatical cases are represented except the accusative.

1. Viśvámitro yád ávahat Sudásam III 53.9
2. Viśvámitrāya dádato maghā́ni III 53.7
3. Viśvámitrasya rakṣati III 53.12.
4. Viśvámitrā arāsata III 53.13.
5. Viśvámitrā utá ta Indra nūnám X 89.17.
6. Viśvámitrebhir idhyate ájasraḥ III 1.21.
7. Revád Agne Viśvámitreṣu śám yóḥ III 18.4.
8. Práti Viśvāmitra-Jamadagnī dáme X 167.4.

(1) Mahā́m̐ ṛṣir devajā́ devájūtó'stabhnāt śíndhum arṇavám nṛcákṣāḥ /
Viśvā́mitro yád ávahat Sudā́sam ápriyāyata Kuśikébhir Índraḥ // (III 53.9).

1. Consult Max Müller's Indices attached to the third and fourth volumes of the first Edition, also Bloomfield's Vedic Concordance.

Translation—

Great Ṛṣi, heaven-born, (he) favoured of the gods, leader of men, stopped the river in floods. When (such a) Viśvāmitra steered Sudās through, Indra was pleased with the Kuśikas.

(2) Imé Bhojá Áṅgiraso vírūpāḥ
Divásputrāso ásurasya vīráḥ /
Viśvámitrāya dádato maghā́ni
Sahasrasāvé prátiranta áyuḥ // III 53.7.

Translation—

These Bhojas,[2] these various Aṅgirasas, and these heroic sons of mighty heaven indeed, increase my life, by bestowing on me riches in this thousand-offer-sacrifice.

(3) Yá imé ródasī ubhé
ahám índram átuṣṭavam
Viśvámitrasya rakṣati
Bráhmedám Bhā́ratam jánam // III 53.12.

Translation—

I have made these Heaven and Earth extol Indra, and (surely) this prayer of Viśvāmitra protects the Bhārata[3] race.

(4) Viśvámitrā arāsata
Bráhméndrāya vajríṇe /
Kárad ínnaḥ surā́dhasaḥ // III 53.13.

Translation—

The Viśvāmitras have addressed a prayer to Indra, the wielder of the thunderbolt. He will indeed make us very opulent.

(5) Evá te vayám Indra bhuñjatīnā́m
Vidyā́ma sumatīnā́m návānām /
Vidyā́ma vástor ávasā gṛṇánto
Viśvā́mitrā utá ta Indra nūnám // X 89.17.

Translation—

May we, O Indra, the descendants[4] of Viśvāmitra, sincerely praising you through the day for protection, obtain thy protecting (favours), may we obtain thy recent (favours).

(6) Jánmañjanman níhoto[5] jātávedāḥ
Viśvā́mitrebhir idhyate ájasraḥ /
Tásya vayám sumataú yajñíyasya
Ápi bhadré saumanasé syāma // III 1.21.

2. Bhojas not mentioned among the manuṣya-names of the Nighaṇṭu (II.3) as for instance the Turvaśas, Druhyus, Yadus etc.

3. According to Nighaṇṭu III 18 Bharatāḥ (Bhāratāḥ) and Kuravaḥ are among the eight Ṛtvic-names : Bhāratam Bharata-kulam janam rakṣati—Sāyaṇa.

4. The Viśvāmitras who figure in this maṇḍala are Ṛṣabha, Kata, Utkīla Kātya, Gāthin Kauśika, Devaśravas and Devavāta (Bhāratau), Prajāpati Vaiśvāmitra. Outside this maṇḍala, Madhucchandas Vaiśvāmitra appears in the first (RV I 1-10) with his son Jetā (RV I 11) ; Reṇu appears in the tenth (RV X 89), so also Aṣṭaka (X 104), Purāṇa (X 160) and Aghamarṣaṇa Mādhucchandasa (X 90).

5. Janman-janman sarveṣu manuṣyeṣu nihito Jātavedāḥ // Sāyaṇa.

Translation—

The sacred fire (Jātavedas) is indeed kept by every man, but the Viśvāmitras kindle him ever more. May we, who already enjoy his favour, ever be in the good books of that adorable (deity)!

(7) Úcchocíṣā sahasasputra[6] stutáḥ
Bṛhád váyaḥ śaśamānéṣu dhehi /
Revád Agne Viśvámitreṣu śám yóḥ
Marmṛjmá te tanvám bhūri krtvaḥ //
(Seer Kata) III 18.4.

Translation—

Arise, O son of strength, as you are praised. Confer abundant food and wealth upon us, the Viśvāmitras who praise you. Grant us exemption from sickness and danger. We shall, O Energiser Agni, sprinkle your person profusely (with ghee, butter, milk etc.).

(8) Prásūto bhakṣám akaram carávápi
Stómam cemám prathamáḥ sūrír únmṛje /
Suté sāténa yádyāgaman vām
Práti Viśvāmitra-Jamadagnī dáme // X 167.4.

Translation—

Inspired by you, I have prepared the food with the caru (also), and as chief worshipper, I fashion this hymn of praise. (Indra replies) Yes, O Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni, as the Soma is being pressed in your sacrificial home, I will come with gifts (then, you will offer me the hymn).

The above references are adequate enough to give us a sketch of the sage Viśvāmitra of the Ṛgveda. He is a great ṛṣi, god's favourite and wonder-worker. His connection with Sudās, the Bhojas and the Bharatas has been expressed. He has the co-operation and regard of other priests, Jamadagni, Aṅgirasas and the Maruts. His was the leading part as priest at a thousand-offer-sacrifice (III 53.7). He wielded great influence as he made heaven and earth extol Indra and was confident that his prayer to that Deity would ensure protection to his disciples the Bharatas. He is not less efficient in composing beautiful hymns, hearing which the gods, specially Indra, would shower bounty upon him and his followers. Finally, his descendants, the Viśvāmitras, have kept up the great tradition set up by him. They continue to be Indra's favourites, for one of them invokes Indra as a Kauśika (I 10.11). As the seer Reṇu says, the Viśvāmitras always enjoy the favours of Indra.

6. The pada-pāṭha divides this into two words sahasaḥ and putra, but both have last accent apparently on account of "āmantritasya ca" (Pāṇini VIII 1.19), though 'sahasaḥ' being in the genitive cannot come under that rule. The sarvānudātta will apply to it only if it is regarded as one with 'putra.' Could it be one word like Vācaspati?

The wonderful achievement of Viśvāmitra, referred to above (III 53.9), is the subject of an entire hymn *viz.* III. 33. It is in the shape of a dialogue between Viśvāmitra and the Rivers, at the confluence of the Vīpāś and Śutudrī (Beas and Sutlej). The sage prays to the Rivers to become fordable for him and his royal patorn Sudās and his retinue. The Rivers feel flattered of course by his prayer, but do not comply because they have had to obey a higher Power. But Viśvāmitra's repeated appeal in fulsome words moves them in the end to oblige him.

RV III 53 is an important hymn giving us the personal history of Viśvāmitra in another episode *viz.* the conduct of the Horse-sacrifice (aśvamedha) on behalf of the Bharatas. This part of the hymn constitutes very good poetry. Viśvāmitra entreats Indra to stay at the sacrifice, not to go away : entreats him as a son entreats the father by holding the skirts of his garment. Then he calls upon the Adhvaryu to join in the reception, commends the soma-offer through the favourite liaison Agni, feels much gratified at his officiating at the Aśvamedha; the Bhojas, the Aṅgirasas and the Maruts honour him. He then draws inspiration through his earlier deeds of glory, *viz.* the crossing of the Rivers and helping Sudās's sacrifice whereby he elevated himself in the estimation of Indra. And he further encourages the Kuśikas to praise more and drink more along with the great gods. Surely, the wielder of the thunderbolt, Indra, to whom the Viśvāmitras have offered praise, will make them affluent. In stanza 14, the great sage switches on to a different strain, as is not unnatural for a man in power for the time being. It is a famous verse, which has drawn the attention of scholars[7] especially regarding Vedic geography—

Kím te kṛṇvanti Kíkaṭeṣu gávo
Nā́śíram duhré ná tapanti gharmám /
Á no bhara prámagandasya védo
Naicāśākhám maghavan randhayā naḥ // III 53·14.

Translation—

What will the cattle do for you in the Kīkaṭa country ? They do not draw milk for preparing the soma, nor do they heat the ' gharma ' (a sacrificial vessel) with milk in it. Bring us the wealth of Pramaganda as well as the holdings of the Nīcaśākha.

It is not impossible that there is some sarcasm behind this utterance of Viśvāmitra directed against his enemies. It is the business of Indra to go to any person that praises, here Indra is dissuaded from such a solicitude : what will they do for you in a damned, unmentionable, (Kīkaṭa is a harsh enough name, by the way) out of the way place, those cattle (gāvaḥ in the sense of paśu) *i.e.* barbarous people ? They make no offering, perform no rite. They are usurers and of low birth. Carry away their wealth for us, O Indra. Such is the venom that Viśvāmitra is capable of pouring against the enemy.

7 See " Kīkaṭa in RK-Samhitā " by K. C. Chattopadhyaya, Allahabad, in the Woolner Commemoration Volume, Lahore. Stating all previous conclusions on the subject Dr. Chattopadhyaya says Kīkaṭa is Kurukṣetra and not Magadha as some other scholars have said. *cf.* VI I p. 159.

The next two verses of the hymn (III 53.15-16) are indicative of Viśvāmitra's discomfiture on one occasion. Viśvāmitra became a victim of unconsciousness (amati); then the Sasarparī (trumpet-like sound) given out by Jamadagni restored him. Sasarparī put new life into Viśvāmitra.

The last four verses of the hymn are the notorious Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ alleged to be imprecations against Vasiṣṭha. Durgācārya, being a Kāpiṣṭhala Vāsiṣṭha, refuses to comment on them (com. Nir. IV 14.2). In point of fact, these are expressions of hatred and raillery against an enemy in general; he is not specified as this or that person. The learned people never care to ridicule the ignorant. Surely people would not put forward an ass to compete with a horse. "May he who hates us be downfallen and may his vital breath abandon him whom we hate." Still worse, he 'heats (the enemy) like an axe and cuts him like a Śimbala tree'; (the enemy) 'vomits foam like a seething and overboiling cauldron.'[8]

(B) VASIṢṬHA

The word Vasiṣṭha has been used in the Ṛgveda no less than fifty times. On a few occasions only (II 9.1, VII 1.8, X 15.8, 95.17) it is used as an adjective meaning best, excellent (vasumattama, vāsayitṛtama). The other references are sufficient to present a concrete sketch of the personality of Vasiṣṭha and the achievements of himself and his followers. The greatest deed of Vasiṣṭha is the success which he brought to Sudās in the famous Battle of the Ten Kings (Dāśarājña) (VII 18; 33), on which occasion, he also, like Viśvāmitra, persuaded the River Paruṣṇī to leave way to his disciple Sudās. Vasiṣṭha became the family priest of the Bharatas and the people of the Tṛtsus prospered (VII 33,6). He was able to lure Indra away from the Soma drink at Pāśadyumna's sacrifice, to the sacrifice which he himself was conducting (VII 33.2). He was equally the favourite of other gods. The Aśvins helped him out of a fix, though the occasion is not specified (I 112.9). Varuṇa gave him a lift on his ship (VII 88.3 and 4). The birth of the sage Vasiṣṭha has been stated, but unfortunately, not in clear terms (VII 33.10-14); he was born of the Apsaras Urvaśī by Mitra and Varuṇa at a sacrifice. Sāyaṇa believes in the repeated births of Vasiṣṭha (VII 33.9).

Professor Velankar[9] has pointed out, in an admirable article, how in each "Family-book" (maṇḍala), certain hymns can be marked out as 'family-hymns' *i.e.* hymns which describe the family history and glory of the seer of the maṇḍala. This invests the poetry of the Ṛgveda with a stamp of concreteness and realism. A hymn of praise to a god, whom we cannot see, would otherwise, be airy nothing.

8. JUB (1935) "Hymns to Indra by the Viśvāmitras" Tr. with annotations by Prof. H. D. Velankar. Arts. pp. 42-43. The notes are copious and provide a rare advantage to the student of knowing through them the opinions expressed by the celebrated German interpreters of the Veda like Pischel, Geldner and Oldenberg.

9. JBBRAS 1942, pp. 1-22. "Family-hymns in the Family-maṇḍalas" by Prof. H. D. Velankar. They are RV III 33 and 53, IV 18, V 40, VI 47, VII 18,33. No family hymn is yet traced in the II (Gṛtsamada) Maṇḍala. According to Geldner (cited by Prof. Velankar), only III 53, VI 47, and VII 33 were pointed out as family hymns.

Now it is possible to get a brief, yet clear enough, sketch of some of the great Vedic personalities. The history and geography of Vedic India glimmer here and there, lighting up at least a few patches of time and space. The history of the sages, for instance, can be traced to two to three generations if not more. Thus among the Viśvāmitras we can trace three : Viśvāmitra-Madhucchandas-Jetā, Viśvāmitra-Kata-Utkīla. So among the Vasiṣṭhas : Vasiṣṭha-Śakti-Parāśara etc. Even so the great rivers of the Punjab and Madhyadeśa. Peoples and principalities like the Bharatas, the Tṛtsus, the Purus, the Pañcajanas and the Kīkaṭas etc. have a historical reality about them. Yet we are warned not to suppose that these family-hymns were made to design. They are but accidental and reflect what was in vogue in Vedic society—*viz.* that each family cherished the glory of its ancestors.

The family-hymns of the Vasiṣṭhas are pointed out to be two, *i.e.* VII 18 and 33. The main theme of the eighteenth hymn is the Battle of the Ten Kings which is described in detail. There does not seem to be much action or *melee* in the Battle. King Sudās had after all a small army and he was almost to be routed as the enemy hosts hemmed in on three sides, with the powerful Paruṣṇī threatening the rear. The alternative was either to fight with the enemy straight and take the consequences or to perish in the river stream. At this crucial moment Vasiṣṭha's prayer to Indra brought about Sudās's success. By his persuasive hymns (which are not given as in the case of Viśvāmitra) the River Paruṣṇī rendered herself shallow enough for the armies to cross over and by the time the enemies pursued, the stream swelled to its original volume and velocity so that the rank and file of the enemy were simply washed down marking several furrows on the surface of the stream. The few that succeeded in swimming across were easily destroyed by Sudās. The description which is highly poetic, with subtle irony to embellish it may be illustrated, by a few verses quoted below.[10]

Árṇāmsi cit paprathānā́ Sudā́sa
Índro gādhā́nyakṛṇot supārā́ /
Śárdhantam Śimyúm ucáthasya návyaḥ
Sā́pam síndhūnām akṛṇod áśastīḥ // VII 18.5.

" Indra made even the vastly flowing waters of (the Paruṣṇī) shallow and easily fordable to King Sudās. He who is fit to be honoured by our hymn made the arrogant Śimyu and his imprecations the floating dirt (on the surface) of the River."

Puroḷā́ ít Turváśo yákṣur āsīt
Rāyé mátsyāso níśitā ápīva /
Śruṣṭím cakrur Bhṛ́gavo Druhyávaś ca
Sákhā sákhāyam atarad víṣūcoḥ // –6

" Túrvaśa, the sacrificer, himself became the cake-offering ; and so were also the Matsyas, who thought as if they were specially fitted for receiving wealth ! The

10. The translations are generally from Prof. Velankar's JBBRAS 1942.

Bhṛgus and the Druhyus followed them obediently ! In (each of) the two adjacent streams of the fleeing foes, a friend did help another friend (to save his life) ! "[11]

Durādhyo Áditim srevāyanto
'cetáso ví jagṛbhre Páruṣṇīm /
Mahnā́vivyak pṛthivī́m pátyamānaḥ
Paśúṣkavír aśayaccā́yamānaḥ // –8

" Those ignorant fools of impious thoughts divided the stream of the Paruṣṇī, trying to make the freely moving river go astray ! (And then) the poet (of the enemy) lay down as a victim (following the cake-offering), looking steadfastly (because dead !) and stretched himself over the earth in full length, thus mastering it ! "[12]

Īyúr ártham ná nyarthám Páruṣṇīm
Āśúś canéd abhipitvám jagāma /
Sudā́sa Índras sutúkā̆ amítrān
Árandhayan mā́nuṣe vádhrivācaḥ // –9

" They went to the Paruṣṇī to meet with a disaster like one who goes to meet a goal. Even the swift (horse) could not reach the resting-place, *i.e.* the camp. For the sake of Sudās, Indra subdued the gracefully (?) retreating enemies of impotent words among men."

Īyúr gā́vo ná yávasād ágopāḥ
Yathākṛtám abhí mitrám citā́saḥ /
Pṛ́śnigāvaḥ pṛ́śninipreṣitāsaḥ
Śruṣṭím cakrur niyúto rántayaś ca // –10

" They went away like cows without a keeper, (when driven out) from the pasture, collecting themselves around a friend whom they could possibly secure ; they were sent down to the earth (by Indra) to possess cows in the form of the earth ! their horses and enjoyments obediently followed them there ! "

Ékam ca yó vimśatím ca śravasyā́
Vaikarṇáyor jánān rā́jā nyástaḥ /
Dasmó ná sádman ní śiśāti barhíḥ
Śū́raḥ sárgam akṛṇod Índra eṣām // –11

11. The whole trend is ironical, cruelly, as Prof. Velankar puts it. Prof. Velankar's interpretation is quite original. Although differing totally from Sāyaṇa whose com. here, to be frank, cannot help us to get a concrete and cogent picture of the fight, the Professor has hit off a brilliant idea by taking puroḷāḥ in the sense of puroḷāśa (puroḍāśa), ' cake-offering.' (puroḷāḥ purogāmī purodātā vā : Sāyaṇa !). Puroḷāḥ is, perhaps, to be taken as a Nairukta abbreviation of puroḍāśa. Helplessly does Wilson remark : ' The legend, such as it is, is very obscurely told.' (RV Tr. Vol. 4, p. 57 n2)

12. The last line of the verse is, again, ironical. Prof. Velankar takes cāyamāna as an adjective while Sāyaṇa considers it a patronymic. The word occurs twice in the Bharadvāja Maṇḍala (VI 27.5 and 8) referring to Abhyāvartin, a king of that name. In that context, Prof. Velankar construes the word as a patronymic, " Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna." *Vide* JUB Sep. 1941 (Vol. X, part 2) pp. 97 and 109. *cf.* VI I p. 260.

" King (Sudās) cut up his enemies like a lovely priest who cuts down the grass for a sacrificial seat, when he overthrew the 21 peoples of the two Vikarṇas with a desire for fame. Brave Indra brought about their flight."

Ví sadyó víśvā dṛmhitányeṣām
Índraḥ púras sáhasā saptá dardaḥ /
Vyánavasya Tṛ́tsave gáyam bhāk
Jéṣma Pūrúm vidáthe mṛ́dhrávācam // –13

" In a moment did Indra batter down with force all the seven forts and other strong places of these *i.e.* the enemies. He gave away the wealth of the Anu prince to the Tṛtsu priest; we have conquered the Pūru prince who had used insolent words in the sacrificial assembly."

Ní gavyávó'navo Druhyávaś ca
Ṣaṣṭíḥ śatá suṣupuḥ ṣáṭ sahásrā /
Ṣaṣṭír vīráso ádhi ṣáḍ duvoyú
Víśvéd Índrasya vīríā kṛtáni // –14

" The loot-seeking Anus and the Druhyus numbering sixty hundred and six thousand respectively, lay down in eternal slumber. (But) the brave warriors (on our side) were (only) sixty and six more, (who did the same) to render service (to Indra). Even all these brave deeds were the performances of Indra."

Ardhám vīrásya śṛtapám anindrám
Párā śárdhantam nunude abhí kṣám /
Índro manyúm manyumío mimāya
Bhejé pathó vartaním pátyamānaḥ // –16

" King Sudās drove down to the ground that enemy who was only a half warrior, who drank the sacrificial food himself, who had no faith in Indra and who was an arrogant person. Indra destroyed the fury of him, who struck with fury. He distributed paths (to men), being the Lord of the Way."

Imám naro marutaḥ saścatánu
Dívodāsam ná pitáram Sudásaḥ /
Aviṣṭánā Paijavanásya kétam
Dūṇáśam kṣatrám ajáram duvoyú // –25

" Oh, valiant Maruts wait upon this king as you did upon Divodāsa, the ancestor of Sudās. In a helpful manner, favour the heart's desire of Paijavana and also his sovereign rule which is indestructible and never grows old."

The other family hymn,[13] VII 33, sings the glory of the Vasiṣṭhas in general and also refers to the birth of the patriarch in particular: The opening verse is impressive–

Śvityáñco mā dakṣiṇatáskapardáḥ
Dhiyamjinváso abhí hí pramandúḥ /
Uttíṣṭhan voce pári barhíṣo nṝ́n
ná me dūrád ávitave Vásiṣṭhāḥ // VII 33.1.

13. It appears quite meet to call this a family hymn, for it is borne out by the ṛṣi and devatā thereof. Of the first nine verses, Vasiṣṭha is the Ṛṣi, the sons are the devatā, for the remaining six, he is the deity and the sons are the Ṛṣis. It is also regarded as a samvāda between Indra and Vasiṣṭha. *cf.* Sarvā. (ed. Macdonell, p. 25) Śvityañcaḥ ṣaḷūnā samstavo Vasiṣṭhasya saputrasya Indreṇa vā samvādaḥ /

" The white-robed sages with the knot of their hair to the right have greatly delighted me by stirring up my heart. (When I heard their hymn) I got up from my grass-seat and said to the men around: " The Vasiṣṭhas are not to be favoured by me from a distance."

Dūrā́d Índram anayanná suténa
Tiró Vaiśantám áti pā́ntam ugrám /
Pā́śadyumnasya Vāyatásya sómāt
Sutā́d Índro avṛṇītā Vásiṣṭhān // -2

" They brought Indra to themselves from afar by means of their pressed juice, away from Vaiśanta and in spite of the fierce Pānta![14] (Similarly) Indra chose his Vasiṣṭhas (and went to them), leaving aside even the pressed juice of Pāśadyumna Vāyata."

Evén nú kam síndhum ebhis tatāra
Evén nú kam Bhedám ebhir jaghāna /
Evén nú kam Dāśarājñé Sudā́sam
Prāvad Índro bráhmaṇā vo Vasiṣṭhāḥ // -3

" Thus did he cross the river Paruṣṇī with them ; thus did he kill Bheda with them. Thus indeed did Indra save Sudās in the Dāśarājña war owing to your hymn, oh Vasiṣṭhas."

Úd dyā́mivét tṛṣṇájo nāthitā́saḥ
Ádīdhayur Dāśarājñé vṛtā́saḥ /
Vásiṣṭhasya stuvatá Índro aśrot
Urúm Tṛ́tsubhyo akṛṇod u lokám // -5

" (The Tṛtsus) when surrounded and distressed in the Dāśarājña war looked up (to Indra for help), as thirsty men look up to the heaven (for rain). Indra heard while Vasiṣṭha was praising him and gave wide enough space to the Tṛtsus."

Daṇḍā́ ivéd goájanāsa āsan
Páricchinnā Bharatā́ arbhakā́saḥ /
Ábhavac ca puraetā́ Vásiṣṭha
Ā́d ít Tṛ́tsūnām víśo aprathanta // -6

" The Bharatas were very few and limited like the sticks used for driving the cows. But as soon as Vasiṣṭha became their leader immediately then the followers of the Tṛtsus became vast and unlimited."

Sū́ryasyeva vakṣátho jyótir eṣām
Samudrásyeva mahimā́ gabhīrā́ḥ /
Vā́tasyeva prajavó nā́nyéna
Stómo Vasiṣṭhā ánvetave vaḥ // -8

14. Prof. Velankar takes Vaiśanta and Pānta as proper names. Sāyaṇa—" Veśantaḥ palvalam / Atra veśantaśabdena somādhāraś camaso lakṣyate / tatstham somam pāntam pibantam ugram udgūrṇam Indram / " We are pleased that Prof. Velankar, however, suggests an alternative translation—" Perhaps, ' They brought the fierce Indra from afar, away from and inspite of the tubful drink " *Vide* note on p. 20 JBBRAS (1942).

" Their light (of glory) is like the growing splendour of the sun, their greatness is vast like that of the ocean.[15] Your hymn is inimitable by others like the swiftness of Wind, Oh Vasiṣṭhas."

Tá ínniṇyám hṛ́dayasya praketaíḥ
Sahásravalśam abhí sám caranti /
Yaména tatám paridhím váyantaḥ
Apsarása úpa sedur Vásiṣṭhāḥ // –9

" They alone move about fearlessly owing to the knowledge of their heart, in the secret of a thousand branches. Intending to weave that (secret) garment, first woven by Yama, the Vasiṣṭhas approached the celestial nymph (for birth)."

Vidyúto jyótih pári sañjíhānam
Mitrā́várunā yád ápaśyatām tvā /
Tát te jánmotaíkam Vasiṣṭha
Agástyo yát tvā viśá ājabhā́ra // –10

" That was your one birth, Oh Vasiṣṭha, when Mitra and Varuṇa saw you leaving your own luminous body of lightning (for being born as their son from Urvaśī). (And) when Agastya brought you to the human beings, (that was your second birth).

Utā́si Maitrāvaruṇó Vasiṣṭho-
rváśyā brahman mánasó'dhi jātáḥ /
Drapsám skannám bráhmaṇā daívyena
Víśve devā́ḥ púṣkare tvādadanta // –11

" And indeed you are the son of Mitrāvaruṇā, Oh Vasiṣṭha, born from Urvaśī, owing to their ardent love for her. The Viśve Devas held their dropped semen in a lotus with the help of a celestial hymn."

Sá praketá ubháyasya pravidvā́nt-
Sahásradāna utá vā sádānaḥ /
Yaména tatám paridhím vayiṣyán
Apsarásaḥ pári jajñe Vásiṣṭhaḥ // –12

" That Vasiṣṭha, well acquainted with both (gods and men), who is an appreciative giver of a thousand gifts or, even a continual giver of gifts, was born from the nymph, intending to weave the garment[16] first woven by Yama."

Satré hajātā́viṣitā́ námobhiḥ
Kumbhé rétas siṣicatuḥ samānám /
Táto ha Mā́na údiyāya mádhyāt
Táto jātám ṛ́ṣim āhur Vásiṣṭham // –13

15. *cf.* Samudra iva gāmbhīrye, dhairyeṇa himavān iva : (Rām. I 1). The string of similes is impressive.

16. Compare the ancient Greek idea that the three Fatal Sisters weave the web of LIFE. They are : Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. They lived in the deep abyss of Demogorgon ' with unwearied fingers drawing out the threads of life.' One held the spindle or distaff, the second drew out the thread and the third cut it off. Brewer : Reader's Handbook of famous names in fiction, Allusions etc. (1934).

" Being impelled by the prayers (of the Viśve Devas), they (*i.e.* Mitra and Varuṇa) visited their sacrifice and dropped their semen together in a jar (at the sight of Urvaśī). From the middle of it arose Māna. They call the sage Vasiṣṭha who was born from that (semen)."

Ukthabhṛ́tam Sāmabhṛ́tam bibharti
Grā́vāṇam bíbhrat prá vadātyágre /
Úpainam ādhvam sumanasyámānā
Ā́ vo gacchāti pratṛdo Vásiṣṭhaḥ // –14

" He supports the bringers of Uktha and the Sāman. Holding the press-stone, he always speaks with authority in front of all. Wait upon him with a delighted mind, here comes Vasiṣṭha to you, oh descendents of Pratṛd."

The Dāśarājña war is described again in the 83rd hymn which is a prayer to the dual divinity Indrā-Varuṇa. It is described as a past event when Indra and Varuṇa jointly gave strength to Sudās to resist the onslaught of the enemies and when they directly also rendered the enemy powerless (vv 6-8).

Dāśarājñé páriyattāya viśvátaḥ
Sudā́sa Indrā-Varuṇāvaśikṣatam /
Śvityáñco yátra námasā kapardíno
Dhiyā́ dhívanto ásapanta Tṛ́tsavaḥ // VII 83·8

" In the Battle of the Ten Kings, Sudās was overwhelmed by the enemy on all sides. The white-complexioned Tṛtsus supported him with rites and prayers. (At such a trying time), both of you taught Sudās (to resist the attack)."

But the immediate concern as indicated by vv 1-5 seems to be to face other enemies. The Dāśarājña war marks a former victory. Sudās had had to contend with enemies from within and without continuously. In fact the 5th verse appears to be a prayer just before the day of battle :

Índrā-Varuṇāv abhyā́ tapanti
Māghányaryó vanúṣām árātayaḥ /
Yuvám hí vásva ubháyasya rā́jathaḥ
Ádha smā no'vatam pā́rye diví // –5

" The fierce weapons of the enemy distress me, Oh Indra and Varuṇa, as also the more malignant among my foes. You reign supreme over both fortunes (of Earth and Heaven). Therefore, pray, do protect us on the day of battle."

The efficacy of the prayers and consequent popularity of the Vasiṣṭhas gave rise, alongside, to bitter jealousy. Hence we find throughout the maṇḍala frequent appeals to the gods for protection from the malignant attacks of the enemy. It is often the fate of the gentle and the noble folk to suffer at the hands of back-biters. The latter have no face nor ground to attack openly ; but are extremely jealous of the good man's goodness. So the beast in them plays behind the back. Similar was the case with Vasiṣṭha. Apart from the foreign enemies whom his tribe had to meet almost as daily occupation in their new settlements, there must

have been a good deal of stabbing from behind; so much so that Vasiṣṭha prays Indra and Varuṇa to destroy the enemy, be he a Dāsa or an Ārya.[17]

In this connection we are led to believe that it is not mere prayer to the gods, or offering at a sacrifice, or even the flourish of weapons that led the chieftains to victory. All these straightforward efforts were implemented if not superseded by black magic, charms and spells. A variety of fiends, called Rākṣasas or Yātudhānas, enter the arena and play havoc. It is said they would be employed—even as they employ mercenaries nowadays—by force of magical spells by the contending parties to kill the enemy. Thus it is said, was brought about, the death of Vasiṣṭha's son Śakti,[18] who, at the instigation (as is imagined) of Viśvāmitra was thrown into a forest-fire by the fiends employed by the sons of Sudās. Though a later account, we may cite the incident of King Kalmāṣapāda becoming a Rākṣasa himself to devour the hundred sons of Vasiṣṭha.[19] Vasiṣṭha's person proved no exception to the attack of sorcery. Viśvāmitra commanded the river Sarasvatī to wash Vasiṣṭha down her stream to him so that he could kill him. She obeyed but made the current too quick for Viśvāmitra to grapple the victim. Vasiṣṭha was at the same time saved. But Viśvāmitra cursed the river to run blood for a year whence she became the Aruṇā (" Red River ").[20] It must be such extensive recourse to witchcraft that prompted Vasiṣṭha to invoke the protection of the dual gods Indrā-Soma against the Yātudhānas; the hymn is commonly designated as Rakṣoghnasūkta (VII 104).

Yó mā pákena mánasā cárantam
Abhicáṣṭe ánṛtebhir vácobhiḥ /
Ápa iva kāśínā sáṅgṛbhītāḥ
Ásannastvāsata Indra vaktá // VII 104·8

"May he who with false allegations maligns me, who is of a pure mind, may such a speaker of falsehood, Oh Indra, cease to be, like water grasped in the fist." Or, again,

Yé pākaśaṃsáṃ viháranta évaiḥ
Yé vā bhadrám dūṣáyanti svadhábhiḥ /
Áhaye vā tán pradádātu Sómaḥ
Á vā dadhātu Nírṛter upásthe // –9

'May Soma give to the serpent or consign to the lap of Nirṛti, those who harass me with false accusations and those who vilify spitefully all that is good in me.'

It is painful to hear curses as much as to pronounce them, how much more should the great Vasiṣṭha have been harassed that he is driven to burst forth with

17. Dāsā ca vṛtrā hatam āryāṇi ca (VII 83.1c)

18. *Vide* Sarvā. p. 130 Śakti was killed by the Viśvāmitras according to the JB (JAOS 18.47). *cf.* VI II 349.

19. *cf.* Sāyaṇa on VII 104.12, Wilson's note on p. 207 of his Translation, Vol. 4. MBh. I 176.6 f. Rām. 8.66.8.

20. MBh IX 42.1 f. See also Hopkins, Epic Mythology, p. 188.

endless curses upon the evil-doer and the enemy. Here is a sample of his reaction to the fiendish spirits called Yātus :

Úlūkayātum śuśulūkayātum
Jahí śváyātum utá kókayātum /
Suparṇáyātum utá gṛ́dhrāyātum
Dṛṣádeva prá mṛṇa rákṣa Indra // –22

" Destroy the evil spirits whether they are in the form of owls big and small, in the form of a dog or a wolf, or an eagle, or a vulture, pound the demon, O Indra, as with a boulder."

Índra jahí púmāmsam yātudhā́nam
Utá stríyam māyáyā śā́śadānām /
Vígrīvāso mū́radevā ṛdantu
Mā́ té dṛśantsū́ryam uccárantam // –24

"Put down, O Indra, whether it is a man or a woman, who as an evil spirit does mischief by deceit. Let these bloodthirsty demons perish with their heads cut off, so that they may not live to see the rising sun."

Affecting his personal history, we find Vasiṣṭha caught in a couple of amusing if not compromising situations. The 55th hymn is called prasvāpinyupaniṣat, one that sends all to sleep. The contents may be summarised as follows :—

The Seer addresses the attacking dog.[21] ' On brindled dog, when you open your mouth to bark, there do flash like shining weapons, your teeth through the jaws. Desist and sleep soundly. Or pursue a thief or a robber ; why do you bother us who are praisers of Indra ? May you tear asunder the pig, and the pig tear you in retaliation ; why do you bother us who are praisers of Indra ?" Then he pronounces a spell as it were : " Let the mother sleep, let the father sleep, let the dog sleep and the lord of the house as well ; let all the relations sleep and so the men round about. Whoever sits, moves about or sees us, the eyes of all those shall we close, so as to make them as motionless as this mansion. With the thousand rays does the Great Benefactor (Sun) rise from amidst yonder sea. With his gracious help shall we send all people to sleep. Those who lie in the vestibule or in the carriages or those ladies who lie on mattresses, the ladies of auspicious fragrance—all these shall we send to sound sleep." Such an encounter with a canine sentinel and such occasion to put the whole life of a mansion into deep slumber must mean a peculiar situation for Vasiṣṭha !

21. RV VII 55.2-8. Yádarjuna Sārameya datáḥ piśaṅga yácchase / Vīva bhrājanta ṛṣṭáya úpa srákveṣu bápsato ní ṣú svapa // Stenám rāya Sārameya táskaram vā punassara / Stotṝn Índrasya rāyasi kiṃ asmā́n ducchunāyase ni ṣú svapa // Tvám sūkarásya dardṛhi táva dardartu sūkaráḥ / Stotṝn Índrasya rāyasi kim asmā́n ducchunāyase ni ṣú svapa // Sástu mātā́ sástu pitā́ sástu śvā́ sástu viśpátiḥ / Sasántu sárve jñātáyaḥ sástvayám abhito jánaḥ // Yá ā́ste yáś ca cárati yáś ca paśyáti no jánaḥ / Téṣām sám hanmo akṣā́ṇi yáthedám harmyám táthā // Sahásraśṛṅgo vṛṣabhó yás samudrā́d udā́carat / Ténā sahasyenā vayám ni jánāntsvā́payāmasi // Proṣṭheśayā́ vahyeśayā́ nā́rīr yā́s talpaśī́varīḥ / Striyo yā́ḥ púṇyagandhās tā́s sárvās svāpayāmasi //

But what a revelation to know that it was all in a dream ! The Bṛhaddevatā relates the story[22]—" Once during night, Vasiṣṭha in a dream entered Varuṇa's house. Then came the watch-dog to attack him. Barking and rushing upon him, he was trying to bite him. Vasiṣṭha subdued him with a couple of verses and sent him to sleep ; even so did Vasiṣṭha cause all Varuṇa's establishment to sleep too." The same is described in another setting[23] which is more funny.

" That these constitute a lullaby is related in stories. Once upon a time Vasiṣṭha was thirsty and hankering for food, having had to starve for three nights. On the fourth night, he decided to steal and came to Varuṇa's house. In order to to lull the sentry and the hounds to sleep while he entered the commissariat, Vasiṣṭha saw and recited these seven ṛks commencing with 'Yád Arjuna'. "

The 86th is a sort of penitential hymn praying to God Varuṇa to absolve the worshipper of all sin. The expressions are such as to make us think that the seer *i.e.* Vasiṣṭha himself had committed great sin and is therefore begging Varuṇa's mercy.

2. " Do I say this to my own soul ? How can I get unto Varuṇa ? Will he accept my offering without displeasure ? When shall I, with a quiet mind, see him propitiated ?

3. I ask, O Varuṇa, wishing to know this my sin. I go to ask the wise. The sages all tell me the same. Varuṇa it is who is angry with thee.

4. Was it an old sin, O Varuṇa, that thou wishest to destroy thy friend, who always praises thee ? Tell me, thou unconquerable lord, and I will quickly turn to thee with praise freed from sin.

5. Absolve us from the sins of our fathers, and from those which we committed with our own bodies. Release Vasiṣṭha, O King, like a thief who has feasted on stolen cattle, release him like a calf from the rope.

6. It was not our own doing, O Varuṇa, it was necessity an intoxicating draught, passion, dice, thoughtlessness. The old is near to mislead the young ; even sleep brings unrighteousness.

22. BD VI 11-13. Varuṇasya gṛhān rātrau Vasiṣṭhaḥ svapnam ācaran / Praviveśātha tam tatra śvā nadann abhyavartata // Krandantam sārameyam tam dhāvantam daṣṭum udyaṭam / Yadarjuneti ca dvābhyām sāntvayitvā pyasūṣupat // Evam prasvāpayāmāsa janam anyam ca Vāruṇam / iti. Quoted by Sāyaṇa, introducing the hymn.

23. Saḍguruśiṣya on Sarvā. ed. Macdonell, p. 133.

Āsām prasvāpinītvam tu kathāsu parikalpyate /
Vasiṣṭhas tṛṣito'nnārthī trirātrālabdhabhojanaḥ /
Caturtha rātrau cauryārtham Vāruṇam gṛham etya tu /
Koṣṭhāgārapraveśāya pālakaśvādisuptaye /
Yadarjunādi saptarcaṃ dadarśa ca jajāpa ca //

The text of the Sarvā. bears no indication (p. 26)—

8. O Lord, Varuṇa, may this song go well to thy heart! May we prosper in keeping and acquiring! Protect us, O gods, always with your blessings."[24]

Reflecting upon these verses, it is not necessary to suppose that Vasiṣṭha himself committed all sins contemplated, for instance, in the sixth stanza above. The whole hymn is like an "aparādha-kṣamāpaṇa-stotra," praying for forgiveness of sins which are apt to be committed by man; a repetition of the hymn every day by the eager worshipper also ensures desisting from committing the sins specified. In other words, it exerts a kind of prophylactic influence on the mind of the worshipper. Vasiṣṭha perhaps designed this hymn for the benefit of his numerous followers. The last stanza signifies a typical finish for such hymns.

With a little stretch of imagination one thinks that Vasiṣṭha had a strange experience of the sea; perhaps a shipwreck. Father Varuṇa should, of course, save him.

'Apā́m mádhye tasthivā́msam tṛ́ṣṇāvidajjaritā́ram /
Mṛḷā́ sukṣatra mṛḷáya //[25]

"Thirst has possessed me, thy worshipper in the midst of the waters, grant me happiness, O Lord of Wealth, grant me happiness."

Evidently the seer longs for peace and contentment, being caught in the midst of worldly greed. He is at sea, as the English idiom has it. The reference has to be viewed more philosophically than literally. But from another context, however, Vasiṣṭha's sea-voyage seems to be a certainty. (RV VII 88.3-4). The Seer sings:

"Boarding the ship, when Varuṇa and I entered the mid-ocean and floated with other vessels on water we indeed very much enjoyed the delightful rocking of the ship.

"Amīvahāṣṭau vāstoṣpatyādyā gāyatrī śeṣātryupariṣṭād bṛhatyādayo'nuṣṭubhaḥ prasvāpinya upaniṣat" /

24. RV VII 86. Utá svā́yā tanvā 3 sám vade tát kadā nvántárváruṇe bhuvāni / kim me havyám áhṛṇāno juṣeta kadā́ mṛḷīkám sumánā abhi khyam // 2

Pṛcché tád éno Varuṇa didṛkṣū́po emi cikitúṣo vipṛ́ccham / Samānám inme kaváyaś cidāhur ayám ha túbhyam Váruṇo hṛṇīte // 3

Kim ā́ga āsa Varuṇa jyéṣṭham yát stotā́ram jighāmsasi sákhāyam / Prá tánme voco dūlabha svadhāvó'va tvā́nenā́ námasā turá iyām // 5

Áva drughā́ni pitryā́ sṛjā nó'va yā́ vayám cakṛmā́ tanū́bhiḥ / Áva rājan paśutṛpam ná tāyúm sṛjā́ vatsám ná dāmno Vásiṣṭham // 5

Ná sá svó dákṣo Varuṇa dhrútih sā́ súrā manyúr vibhī́dako ácittiḥ / ásti jyā́yān kánīyasa upāré svápnaś canéd ánṛtasya prayotā́ // 6

Ayám sú túbhyam Varuṇa svadhāvo hṛdi stóma úpaśritaś cidastu / Śám naḥ kṣéme śámu yóge no astu yūyám pāta svastibhis sádā naḥ // 8

25. RV VII 89.4. Sāyaṇa—apām samudrāṇām udakānām madhye tasthivāmsam sthitavantam api jaritāram tava stotāram mām tṛṣṇā pipāsā avidat āptavatī / Lavaṇotkaṭasya sāmudrajalasya pānānarhatvāt / atas tādṛśaṃ mām mṛḷa sukhaya //

" Varuṇa took the Ṛṣi Vasiṣṭha on his ship and, with gracious feelings,[26] made him capable of great deeds. Further, the intelligent god, by way of happy time for the minstrel, extended many a dawn into day. (*i.e.* he enabled the sage to spend many happy days on board the ship."[27]

Lastly, Vasiṣṭha was initiated into the deepest secrets of Existence by Varuṇa, who, in this manner can be said to have exercised a truly paternal care over his own son :

Uvā́ca me Váruṇo médhirāya
Tríḥ saptá nā́mā́ghnyā bibharti /
Vidvā́n padásya gúhyā ná vocad
Yugā́ya vípra úparāya śíkṣan //[28]

" Varuṇa told me who am intelligent the thrice seven names that the Cow (or Speech) bears. The wise and skilful Varuṇa also imparted the secrets of the Supreme world to me, his favourite pupil."

(C) VASIṢṬHA—VIŚVĀMITRA RELATIONSHIP

There has been much conjecture and concoction on this point throughout Sanskrit Literature ; and even in recent opinions expressed. But if the Ṛgveda is to be regarded as the basis of our legends and legendary study, it must be acknowledged that there is nothing stated about the mutual relationship of these famous priests of the Ṛgvedic Age. RV III 4 and VII 2 are both Āprī-hymns in the respective Maṇḍalas. How curious that verses 8-11, *i.e.* as many as four consecutive stanzas, are identically the same ! In the words of M. Bloomfield, " We should expect diversity there if anywhere."[29] At worst, the two sages are neither friends nor enemies. One common ground however can be marked out that both befriended the same king, Sudās, at different times. Vasiṣṭha helped Sudās to win the Battle of the Ten Kings. Viśvāmitra also helped Sudās to cross the confluence of Vipāś and Śutudrī, the circumstances of this adventure being however uncertain. It is generally believed[30] that Viśvāmitra was ousted from Sudās' partonage by Vasiṣṭha, whereupon the former set up the confederacy of the ten chieftains against Sudās. But this opinion is questioned ;[31] and a fresh conjecture

26. The Samhitā reads máhobhiḥ, but Sāyaṇa reads ávobhiḥ in the sense of rakṣaṇaiḥ. His authority has however not been traced. Both MM and Poona (Vaidika Samśodhana Maṇḍala) Editions have noticed this discrepancy between the text and the commentary.

27. RV VII 88.3-4—Ā yádruhā́va Váruṇaś ca nā́vam prá yát samudrám īráyāva mádhyam / Ádhi yád apā́m snúbhiś cárāva prá preṅkhá īṅkhayāvahai śubhé kám // Vásiṣṭhaṃ ha Váruṇo nāvyā́dhād ṛṣim cakāra svápā máhobhiḥ / Stotā́ram vipraḥ sudinatvé áhnām yā́nnú dyā́vas tatánan yā́d Uṣā́saḥ //

28. RV VII 87.4 padasya utkṛṣṭasya sthānasya Brahmalokalakṣaṇasya—Sāyaṇa.

29. Bloomfiled, Ṛgveda Repetitions, p. 647. Religion of the Veda p. 72. ' The two books (RV III and VII) share quite a number of other lines (14 common lines in all)'.

30. *Cf.* VI II, p. 275.

31. See IHQ (June 1930) K. C. Chaṭṭopādhyāya on the Dāśarājña Battle pp. 261-64.

put forward that the Bhāradvājas were the family priests of Sudās before either Viśvāmitra or Vasiṣṭha. Viśvāmitra was not responsible for the Legaue of the ten kings. On the other hand it is possible to think that both priests were entertained by Sudās on two different occasions. Whoever the family priest he must, and would, have tolerated the advent of another for temporary service. As the Āryans were confronted with problems of land and living, it is natural that they contracted the enmity of local dwellers. So we can suppose that both priests had their own enemies to contend with. A few expressions are pointed out in RV III 53 and RV VII 18, 33 and 104 to say that they are indirect references to their mutual hatred. But why such a forced surmise ? If the enmity were true why does not the Veda say it ? There is no harm, for we could, in our time-honoured complacency, regard that also as a chapter in our vast heritage !

II

LATER SAMHITĀS

1. *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*

Viśvāmitra won the abode of Agni by means of the hymn " This is that Agni." —Ayam so'gniriti Viśvāmitrasya sūktam bhavati, etena vai Viśvāmitro'gneḥ priyam dhāmāvarundha, Agnerevaitena priyam dhāmāvarundhe.[32] The context is the preparation of the ground for the Fire (Gārhapatyacayana).

Vasiṣṭha should be chosen as Brahman priest according to III 5.2. " The Ṛṣis could not see Indra face to face ; Vasiṣṭha saw him face to face, he said 'Holy lore shall I proclaim to you so that people will be propagated with thee as Purohita ; therefore do thou not proclaim me to the other Ṛṣis.'. To him he proclaimed these shares in the stoma, therefore people were propagated with Vasiṣṭha as Purohita ; therefore a Vasiṣṭha should be chosen as Brahman priest ; verily he is propagated."[33]

Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are together mentioned in connection with the Five Layers of Bricks. The sages Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni and Viśvakarman are identified respectively as Prāṇa, Manas, Cakṣus, Śrotra and Vāc (of the sacrifice) ; they are described as having sprung from the Rathantara, Bṛhat,

32. TS V 2.3.3, Ayam so'gniḥ (RV III 22.1) Sarvā. ascribes the hymn to Gāthī son of Kuśika.

33. Ṛṣayo vā Indram pratyakṣam nāpaśyan tam Vasiṣṭhaḥ pratyaksam apaśyat so'bravīd Brāhmaṇam te vakṣyāmi yathā tvatpurohitāḥ prajāḥ prajaniṣyante'tha metarebhya ṛṣibhyo mā pravoca iti tasmā etāntstomabhāgān abravīt tato Vasiṣṭha purohitāḥ prajāḥ prājāyanta tasmād Vāsiṣṭho Brahmā kāryaḥ praiva jāyate (TS III 5.2). Sāyaṇa Tādṛśam Brāhmaṇam śrutvā athānantaram tvam mām itarebhyo mantrānadhikāribhya ṛṣibhyo mā pravocaḥ. But Keith has overlooked the prohibitive mā in his translation. The context demands the prohibitive, in order to establish the special privilege for the Vāṣiṣṭha. Hence the above translation is given with due correction. (Keith, Veda of the Black Yajus School, Tr. HOS. Vol. 18, p. 279).

Vairūpa, Vairāja, and, Śakvara and Raivata Sāmans.[34] Later after the bricks were duly laid, the text says—

' Yāḥ prācīs tābhir Vasiṣṭha ārdhnot, yā dakṣiṇā tābhir Bharadvājo yāḥ pratīcīs tābhir Viśvāmitro yā udīcīs tābhir Jamadagnir yā ūrdhvās tābhir Viśvakarmā ya evam etāsām ṛddhim vedardhnotyeva ya āsām evam bandhutām veda bandhumān bhavati ya āsām evam kḷptim vada kalpate asmai ya āsām evam āyatanam vedāyatanavān bhavati ya āsām evam pratiṣṭhām veda pratyeva tiṣṭhati //[35]

" With those (bricks) put down on the East, Vasiṣṭha prospered, with those on the south Bharadvāja, with those on the west Viśvāmitra, with those on the north Jamadagni, with those above Viśvakarman. He who knows thus the prosperity in these (bricks) prospers ; he who knows thus their relationship becomes rich in relations ; he who knows thus their ordering, (things) go orderly for him ; he who knows thus their abode becomes possessed of an abode ; he who knows thus their support becomes possessed of support."

This illustrates again the close association of the sages. The phala-śruti is very significant. At all events, it impresses upon the common worshipper the fact that co-operation from all quarters is necessary as exemplified by the great sages of old with regard to the conduct of the sacrifice. It is possible that these sages in particular circumstances did have honest differences, but did not refuse co-operation when required.

We find however but one reference to the rivalry between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra :

Viśvāmitra-Jamadagnī Vasiṣṭhenāspardhetām sa
etajjamadagnir vihavyam apaśyat tena vai
Vasiṣṭhasyendriyam vīryam avṛṅta—

Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni had a quarrel with Vasiṣṭha. Jamadagni saw the Vihavya hymn[36] and drew away all the power and strength of the adversary.[37]

34. These identifications are symbolical. One should approach them with faith (śraddhā). The point at issue is the importance that the Taittirīya attaches equally to Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra along with other sages. They are solid bricks on which the edifice of the Vedic sacrifice is built. Whatever the personal relationships of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were, their active association with the sacrifice is a testimony to their unqualified contribution to the general welfare of the community. To illustrate the symbolism just referred to, one extract may be given—" Ayam puro bhuvas tasya prāṇo bhauvāyano vasantaḥ prāṇāyano gāyatrī vāsantī gāyatriyai gāyatram gāyatrād upāṁśur upāṁśos trivṛt trivṛto Rathantaram Rathantarād Vasiṣṭha ṛṣiḥ prajāpatigṛhītayā tvayā prāṇam gṛhṇāmi prajābhyaḥ." etc. Keith—" This one in front the existent, his, the existent's breath ; spring born of the breath, the Gāyatrī born of the spring, from the Gāyatrī the Gāyatra (Sāman), from the Gāyatra the Upāṁśu (cup) ; from the Upāṁśu the Trivṛt (stoma), from the Trivṛt the Rathantara, from the Rathantara Vasiṣṭha the Ṛṣi. With thee taken by Prajāpati, I take breath for offspring".

35. TS V 2.10.5-6 Keith's translation, p. 45 f.

36. RV X 128.1 Mamāgne nava vihavyo Vaiśvadevam jagatyantam. Sarvā, p. 48.

37. TS III 1.7. Keith, p. 280,

The Taittirīya records a calamity that befell the great Vasiṣṭha *i.e.* the tragic death of his sons.--

Vasiṣṭho hataputro'kāmayata vindeya prajām
abhi Sauḍāsān bhaveyam iti sa etam
ekasmānna pañcāśam apaśyat tam āharat
tenāyajata tato vai so'avindata prajām abhi
Saudāsam abhavad ya evam vidvān sa
ekasmānnapañcāśam āsate vindante prajām
abhi bhrātṛvyān bhavanti /[38]

" Vasiṣṭha his sons slain, desired " May I win offspring and defeat the Saudāsas." He saw this rite of forty-nine nights ; he grasped it and sacrificed with it. Then indeed did he win offspring and defeated the Saudāsas. Those who, knowing thus, perform the rite of forty-nine nights win offspring and defeat their enemies."

2. *Kāṭhaka, Maitrāyaṇī and Vājasaneyi Saṃhitās*

These Saṃhitās have nothing to add to the information already culled out. They repeat the symbolic indentity of Vasiṣṭha, Vaśvāmitra and other sages enunciated by the Taittirīya, only with a small change.[39] The following table will make it clear.

The Identity	TS	KS, MS, VS
Prāṇa-Rathantara—East	Vasiṣṭha	Vasiṣṭha
Manas-Bṛhat—South	Bharadvāja	Bharadvāja
Cakṣus-Vairūpa—West	Viśvāmitra	Jamadagni
Śrotra-Vairāja—North	Jamadagni	Viśvāmitra
Vāc-Śākvara-Raivata—Above	Viśvakarman	Viśvakarman

The following mantra of the Ṛgveda is found repeated by VS and KS.[40]

Evéd Índram vṛ́ṣaṇam vájrabāhum
Vásiṣṭhāso abhyarcantyarkaíḥ /
Sá nas stutó vīrávat pātu gómat
Yūyám pāta svastíbhis sádā naḥ //

" Thus do the Vasiṣṭhas worship with praises Indra showerer of benefits, with arms like the thunderbolt. May he, thus praised, make us wealthy in heroes and in kine. And ye, gods, do protect us always with blessings."

As usual, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are both Seers of several hymns and parts of hymns of the White Yajurveda (VS),[41] which do not contribute to our study,

38. TS VII 4.7. Keith p. 606. compare also VI II, p. 275, KB IV. 8, PB IV 7.3.

39. KS 16.19 ; MS 2.7.19 ; VS 13.54, 57.

40. RV VII 23.6. VS 20.54, KS 8.16. The verse is repeated also in AV XX 12.6, AB 6.23.2, GB 2.4.2, 2.6.5. Vait. 22.14.

41. See C. V. Vaidya, HSL. Vedic Period, p. 207.

except to confirm the uniform importance accorded to both sages by the various Samhitās. Their mutual rivalry, if at all, is of no interest to the general public.

3. *Sāmaveda*

Similar is the case with the Sāmaveda. Only Vasiṣṭha's name is celebrated.[42] But both he and Viśvāmitra are seers of verses and hymns which are mostly borrowed from their Ṛgvedic revelations.[43] SV, again, perceives no enmity between the sages.

4. *Atharvaveda Saṃhitā*

Viśvāmitra is referred in AV in three contexts.

Yaú Bharádvājam āvatho yaú Gavíṣṭhiram
Viśvāmitram[44] Varuṇa Mitra Kútsam /
Yaú Kakṣívantam ávathaḥ prótā Káṇvam /
Taú no muñcatam áṃhasaḥ // AV. V 29.5

" It is a prayer to Mitra and Varuṇa : ' Ye who favour Bharadvāja, Gaviṣṭhira, Viśvāmitra, Kutsa, O Varuṇa and Mitra ; who favour Kakṣīvat and Kaṇva do ye free us from distress."

Káṇvaḥ Kakṣívān Purumīḍhó Agástyaḥ
Śyāvāśvaḥ Sóbharyarcanánāḥ /
Viśvámitro'yám Jamádagnir Átriḥ
Ávantu naḥ Kaśyápo Vāmádevaḥ // XVIII 3.15.

' Let Kaṇva, Kakṣīvat, Purumīḍha, Agastya, Śyāvāśva, Sobhari, Arcanānas, this Viśvāmitra,[45] Jamadagni, Atri, Kaśyapa, Vāmadeva—let all these protect us."

Víśvāmitra Jámadagne Vásiṣṭha
Bháradvāja Gótama Vámadeva /
Śardír no Átrir agrabhīnnámobhiḥ
Súśamsāsaḥ pítaro mṛḍátā naḥ // XVIII 3.16.

" O Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Vasiṣṭha, Bharadvāja, Gotama, Vāmadeva—Atri hath taken our abode with obeisances ; ye fathers of good report, be gracious to us."

42. SV Pūrva. 3.5.9. 4.4.8, 6.2.5. Uttara, 3.13.3, 444.8, 5.9.3.

43. C. V. Vaidya, quoted above, p. 193 et. seq.

44. Viśvāmitram viśvam kṛtsnam jagat mitram yasya saḥ tathoktaḥ / Mitre carṣau iti pūrvapadasya dīrghaḥ /...
Vasiṣṭham / Vasumattamam / Vasumacchabdād iṣṭhani ' Vinmatorluk ' / ' ṭeḥ ' iti ṭilopaḥ / Sarvaśreṣṭham Vasiṣṭhākhyam maharṣim rakṣathaḥ / at AV. IV 29.3—Sāyaṇa.

45. Ayam iti idam śabdena purovartivastuvācinā sarvajana-sannihitatvena sarvamitratvam upapādyate—Sāyaṇa. But Whitney takes ayam with Jamadagni. AV XVIII. 3.63 records the expression " Viśvamitrāḥ " which does not refer to the sage Viśvāmitra or his descendents. The stanza is in praise of Yama, wherein the ' All-Friends ' (Brāhmans) are called upon to offer praise and oblations to the God, so that He may grant long life. See Whitney, AV Tr. (HOS VIII), p. 866.

Viśvāmitra is the seer of a few hymns of the AV. The hymn III 17 is prc nounced for successful agriculture (Kṛṣiḥ).[46] AV V 15-16 are exorcisms t plants ; used for the healing of distempered cattle also ; the later hymn is perhap directed against insect pests. VI 44 is for cessation of disease, according to Kauśik Sūtra (31.6), it is used in a remedial rite against slander (apavāda). VI 141 i pronunced with marking of cattle's ears (gokarṇayor lakṣyakaraṇam) and 142 i for increase of food grain (annasamṛddhi).[47]

Viśvāmitra's name is thus connected with charms and spells ; but they hav all been for good purposes. Whereas, by means of these, diseases were remove and food became abundant, why should the sage not be called Viśvā-mitra ' frien of the world ' ?

The name Vasiṣṭha occurs ten times in the AV. From a study of the context and according to the commentary, the word is used as an adjective five times ;[4] so we shall consider the other five here,[49] referring to the sage.

1. Yāvaṅgirasam avatho yāvagastim
Mitrāvaruṇā Jamadagnim Atrim /
Yau Kaśyapam avatho yau Vasiṣṭham
Yau no muñcatam amhasaḥ // IV 29.3.

" Ye who protect Aṅgiras, Agasti, Jamadagni and Atri, O Mitra and Varuṇa, y who protect Kaśyapa and Vasiṣṭha,—do ye free us from distress."

2. Vasiṣṭha next appears among other names, including Viśvāmitra, (A' XVIII 3.16), as stated above.

3. Údu bráhmānyairata śravasyā́
Índram samaryé mahayā Vasiṣṭha /
Ā́ yó viśvāni śávasā tatāna
Upaśrotā́ ma ī́vato vácāmsi //[50]

" They have all offered their prayer to Indra for the sake of food, you alsc Vasiṣṭha, do extol him at the sacrifice. And may that Indra, who exténded th universe by his might, listen to my words, as I approach him."

46. *Cf.* RV X 101, IV 57 and parts in VS, Ts, Ta, and Ms. Much of RV material is repeated we discover a few variant readings also. Whereas the Samhitā texts have been handed down wit meticulous care and accuracy, a comparative study of the repetitions in the different Samhitā must yield interesting text-critical results.

47. Consult Whitney's Atharva-veda (Tr.)—Harvard Oriental Series, Vols, 7 and 8 (190! Ed. C. R. Lanman.

48. AV VI. 21.2, 44.2, 119.1, VII 55.2, SVIII 3.46.

49. AV IV 29.3, XVIII 3.16, XX 12.1, 6; 117.3. It may be recalled that Whitney conside books XIX and XX as later additions. In his Harvard Translation, he translates XIX as supple ment, XX he does not notice at all. Cruel Death took him away before the volumes wer published. Who knows, had he lived, he would have added XX also as supplement.

50. Same as RV VII 23.1, SV I 330, AB 6.18.3, 20.7, KB 29.6, GB 2.4.2, 6.1.2, AA 5.2.2.8 Vait. 22.13. Designated as ud-u-brahmīya sūkta. ŚŚ 18.19.10, 20.6.

4. The next verse ' Evéd Índram ' (AV XX 12.6) was dealt with above in connection with YV references.

5. Bódhā sú me maghavan vacam émam
Yám te Vásiṣṭho árcati prášastim /
Imá Bráhma sadhamáde juṣasva //[51] XX 117.3.

" O Opulent one ! Give heed to this address of mine, this with which Vasiṣṭha offers you praise. These prayers, be pleased to accept at the sacrifice."

Vasiṣṭha also is the seer of a few hymns in AV. I 29 is a hymn to Brahmaṇa-spati for a chief's success. (Rāṣṭrābhivardhanam sapatnakṣayaṇam ca); an amulet is also tied, it is called abhīvartamaṇi-sūkta.

III 19-22 are to help friends against enemies (19), to Agni and other gods for various blessings (20,21), to gods in general for splendour (varcas) (22).

IV 22 is for the success and prosperity of a king (amitra-kṣayaṇam : for the destruction of the enemy)—for victory in battle according to Kauśika-sūtra.

XX 12 and 117 are hymns borrowed from the Vāsiṣṭha-maṇḍala of RV.

It may be noticed from the above that Vasiṣṭha is by no means a tame sage. He was definitely, and perhaps more actively than Viśvāmitra connected with martial adventures. With rites and incantations for a king's success in battle, or for a man's prosperity or contentment, Vasiṣṭha must have been a heaven to many kings and men in distress. We notice also that there is not the slightest suggestion of Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra rivalry. By the enumeration alongside of various Ṛṣis it is fair to think that all these sages were alike holy in the eyes of the worshipper, and a great deal of time must have separated the sages and the composer of the hymn (IV 29) with the burden ' taú no muñcatam áṃhasaḥ '—an argument for the late age of at least portions of the Atharva-veda. Public opinion does not seem to have taken note of the alleged fued between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. On the other hand, recorded evidence points to the universal recognition accorded fo both the sages. Whatever enmity there might have been, it must have been of a purely personal nature—one that did not affect the well-being of the world at large.

III

BRĀHMAṆAS

This branch of Vedic literature depicts the contributions made by Vasiṣṭha Viśvāmitra to the sacrificial cult. They were chief among those who strove to make the Sacrifice a perfect system. There is not a trace of discord between them;

51. RV VII 22.3, SV 2.279, MS 4.12.4, KS 12.15.

on the other hand their collective service has oftentimes been emphasised. We shall scrutinize in detail :

1. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* first speaks of Viśvāmitra as the seer of the Sampāta Hymns.[52] It is said that he first saw a few hymns which Vāmadeva quickly appropriated as his own, whereupon Viśvāmitra saw fresh ones.[53] In the same manner did Bharadvāja, Vasiṣṭha and Nodhas also see several hymns.[54]

Tān vā etān Sampātān Viśvāmitraḥ prathamam apaśyat tān Viśvāmitreṇa dṛṣṭān Vāmadevo'sṛjataivā tvām Indra vajrinnatra yanna Indro jujuṣe yacca vaṣṭi kathā mahām avṛdhat kasya hotur iti tān kṣipram samapatad yat kṣipram samapatat tat sampātānām sampātatvam /

Sa haikṣāñcakre Viśvāmitro yān vā aham Sampātān apaśyam tān Vāmadevo' sṛṣṭa kāni nvaham sūktāni Sampātāmstatpratimān sṛjeyeti sa etāni sūktāni Sampātāmstatpratimān asṛjata sadyo ha jāto vṛṣabhaḥ kanīna Indraḥ pūrbhidātirad dāsam arkair imāmū ṣu prabhṛtim sātaye dhā icchanti tvā somyāsaḥ sakhāyaḥ Śāsad vahnir duhitur naptyaṅgād abhi taṣṭeva dīdhayā manīṣām iti /

Ya eka iddhavyaś carṣaṇīnām iti Bharadvājo yas tigmaśṛṅgo vṛṣabho na bhīma udu brahmāṇyairata śravasyeti Vasiṣṭho'smā idu pra tavase turāyeti Nodhāḥ /[55]

Later these hymns are praised as follows :

Tad etat sūktam[56] svargyam etena vai sūktena devāḥ svargam lokam ajayan etena ṛṣayaḥ tathaivaitadyajamānā etena sūktena svargam lokam jayanti / Tadu Vaiśvāmitram viśvasya ha vai mitram Viśvāmitra āsa / Viśvam hāsmai mitram bhavati ya evam veda yeṣām caivam vidvān etanmaitrāvaruṇaḥ purastāt sūktānām aharahaḥ śamsati /[57]

" That hymn is heavenly. It is by Viśvāmitra, Viśvāmitra was the friend of all ; all become friendly to him who knows thus and to those for whom a Maitrāvaruṇa, knowing thus, recites this before the hymns day by day." With this sūkta, again, the gods won the heavens, with this the ṛṣis, and so with this will the sacrificers also win the heavenly world.

Similarly the Vasiṣṭha hymn : Udu brahmāṇyairata :[58]

Tad etat sūktam savṛgyam etena vai sūktena devāḥ svargam lokam ajayan etena ṛṣayas tathaivaitad yajamānā etena ṛṣayas tathaivaitad yajamānā etean sūktena svargam lokam jayanti / Tadu Vāsiṣṭham etena vai Vasiṣṭha

52. RV IV 19 ; 22 ; 23.
53. RV III 49 ; 34 ; 36 ; 30 ; 21 ; 38. The hymns are enumerated in the order stated in the Brāhmaṇa.
54. RV VI. 22, VII. 19 ; 24. I. 61.
55. AB VI 18.
56. Sadyo ha jāto vṛṣabhaḥ kanīnaḥ (RV III 49)
57. Ibid VI 20.
58. RV VII 24.

Indrasya priyam dhāmopāgacchat sa paramam lokam ajayat / Upendrasya priyam dhāma gacchati jayati paramam lokam ya evam veda /[59]

" This hymn is heavenly, with this hymn indeed did the gods win the heavens ; with this the Ṛṣis ; and with this will the sacrificers also win the heavenly world. This is by Vasiṣṭha. With this indeed did Vasiṣṭha approach the abode dear to Indra, and he won the supreme world. He who knows thus will go to the abode dear to Upendra (Viṣṇu) and will win the supreme world."

Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are both connected with the Śunaśśepa legend.[60] In the sacrifice which was contemplated by king Hariścandra they officiated as priests : Vasiṣṭha as Brahmā and Viśvāmitra as Hotā. Viśvāmitra's part in the story of Śunaśśepa is remarkable. He befriended poor Śunaśśepa, adopted him into his family as eldest son and passed on to him his earthly possessions as well as his divine lore. As this story has been fully treated in the foregoing chapter, it is unnecessary to dilate upon it here. Suffice it to remember that the two sages were highly regarded by society and that, between them, no rivalry appears to have existed.

Besides the above, there are a few references in the AB to Vasiṣṭha only. He is said to have introduced the Rathantara-sāman and Bharadvāja the Bṛhatsāman, in connection with a hymn of the Ṛgveda :[61]

Rathantaram ājabhārā Vasiṣṭhaḥ /
Bharadvājo Bṛhad ācakre agner iti Bṛhadrathantaravantam evainam tat karoti /[62]

The term Vasiṣṭha has been pointed out as an appellation to Agni :[63]

Adabdhavratapramatir Vasiṣṭha ityagnir vai devānām Vasiṣṭhaḥ /[64]

Agni is Vasiṣṭha (atiśayena nivāsahetuḥ), the best shelter-giver or protector, anp one whose preference is always for harmless rites.[65]

In the chapter which describes the sacrifice and the part played therein by the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, it is said that the famous priests of the times pass on the tradition of the sacrifice and, specially of the participation of the Soma-food (bhakṣa), to their respective royal disciples. Thus, Tura son of Kavaṣa narrated it to Janamejaya son of Parikṣit, Parvata and Narada to Somaka son of Sahadeva, to Sahadeva son of Sṛñjaya, to Bahbru son of Devavṛdh, to Bhīma of

59. AB VI 20.
60. AB VII 16-18.
61. RV X 181.1.
62. AB I 21. *cf.* also Ait. Ā. III 1.6.
63. RV II 9.1[c].
64. AB I 28.
65. adabdhe himsārahite vrate karmaṇi prakṛṣṭā matir yasyāgneḥ so'yam adabdhavratapramatiḥ / Sāyaṇa. AV. Ānandāśrama edn. Vol. I, p. 122.

Vidarbha and to Nagnajit of Gāndhāra; Agni narrated it to Sanaśruta, the suppresser of enemies, knower of the sacrifice, and son of Janaka, (finally) Vasiṣṭha to Sūdās son of Pijavana. And all these having partaken of the Soma-food rose to eminence, all became sovereign lords, being established in glory, all shone like the Sun, gathering tributes from all quarters.[66] This passage warrants the belief that Vasiṣṭha was the priest of king Sudās, at least in the early part of his reign.

That Vasiṣṭha anointed Sudās on the throne is stated in another passage. Enumerating the names of several kings of old who were coronated in the manner in which Indra himself was coronated, it is said "With this great anointing of Indra, Vasiṣṭha anointed Sudās Paijavana. Therefore, Sudās Paijāvana went round the earth completely, conquering on every side, and offered the horse in sacrifice."[67]

Durmukha the Pāñcāla and Atyarāti Jānantapi by the very knowledge of Indra's great anointing conquered the earth, their priests being Bṛhaduktha and Vāsiṣṭha Sātyahavya respectively. A kind of conflict is however reported between Atyarāti and the priest Vāsiṣṭha Sātyahavya. This Vāsiṣṭha, son of Satyahavya said to Atyarāti : "Thou hast conquered entirely the earth on every side: do thou make me great." Then said Atyarāti Jānantapi "When I conquer, O Brahman, the Uttara Kurus, then thou wouldst be king of the earth, and I should be thy General." Vāsiṣṭha Sātyahavya replied : "That is a place of the gods, no mortal man may conquer it. Thou hast been false to me, therefore I take this from thee." Then Amitratapana Śuṣmiṇa Śaibya, a king, slew Atyarāti Jānantapi, whose strength had been taken away and who had lost his power. Therefore one should not play false with a Brahman who knows thus and has done thus (thinking) "Let me not lose my kingdom, nor let breath forsake me."[68]

66. Etamu haiva provāca Turaḥ Kāvaṣeyo Janamejayāya Pārikṣitāyaitamu haiva procatuḥ Parvata-nāradau Somakāya Sāhadevyāya Sahadevāya Sārñjayāya Babhrave Daivāvṛdhāya Bhīmāya Vaidarbhāya Nagnajite Gāndhārāyaitamu haiva provācāgniḥ Sanaśrutāyārindamāya kratuvide Janakāya etamu haiva provāca Vasiṣṭhah Sudāse Paijavanāya te ha te sarva eva mahajjagmur etam bhakṣam bhakṣayitvā sarve haiva mahārājā āsur āditya iva ha sma śriyām pratiṣṭhitās tapanti sarvābhyo digbhyo balim āvahantaḥ // AB VII 34.

67. Etena ha vā Aindreṇa mahābhiṣekeṇa Vasiṣṭhaḥ Sudāsam Paijavanam abhiṣiṣeca tasmād u Sudāḥ Paijavanaḥ samantam sarvataḥ pṛthivīm jayan parīyāyāśvena ca medhyeneje/ AB VIII 21. Other kings anointed in the same fashion are : Tura son of Kavaṣa anointed Janamejaya son of Parikṣit ; Cyavana anointed Śāryāta, Somaśuṣmā anointed Śatānīka, Parvata and Nārada anointed Āmbāṣṭhya and also Yudhāmśrauṣṭhi ; Kaśyapa anointed Viśvakarman, Samvarta son of Aṅgiras anointed Marutta son of Avikṣit, Udamaya son of Atri anointed Aṅga, and Dīrghatamas son of Mamatā anointed Bharata son of Duṣṣanta. After being anointed, all these kings conquered the earth and offered the horse in sacrifice. Ibid. (AB VIII 21).

68. Sa hovāca Vāsiṣṭhaḥ Sātyahavyo'jaiṣīr vai samantam sarvataḥ pṛthivīm mahan mā gamayeti sa hovācātyarātir Jānantapir yadā brāhmaṇottarakurūn jayeyam atha tvamu haiva pṛthivyai rājā syāḥ senāpatir eva te'ham syām iti sa hovāca Vāsiṣṭhaḥ Sātyahavyo devakṣetram vai tanna vai tanmartyo jetum arhatyadruṣo vai ma ā ta idam dada iti tato hātyarātim Jānantapim āttavīryam niśśukram amitratapanaḥ Śuṣmiṇaḥ Śaibyo rājā jaghāna / Tasmād evaṁ viduṣe brāhmaṇāyaivaṁ cakruṣe na kṣatriyo druhyenned rāṣṭrād avapadyeyam ned vā mā prāṇo jahaditi jahaditi // AB VIII 23. See also Keith's Rigveda Brāhmaṇas Translated (Harvard Oriental Series, No. 25, 1920), p. 338 f.

2. The *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*[69] celebrates Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra as follows: While their names are, as usual, connected with several hymns and rites,[70] the Āraṇyaka offers useful exegetical comment on their names: Thus Viśvāmitra is " friend of the Universe " or " one to whom the universe is friend."[71] And Vasiṣṭha is the best or most excellent of all.[72] Viśvāmitra is further described as having Indra reveal himself to him.

" Indra sat down beside Viśvāmitra who was about to recite the hymns of this day. He saying 'This is food,' recited the thousand bṛhatīs. Thus he went to Indra's dear home. Indra said to him, ' Seer, thou hast come to my dear home. Do thou, seer, repeat a second hymn.' He saying ' This is food', recited the thousand bṛhatī verses. Thus he went to Indra's dear home. Indra said to him, ' Seer, thou hast come to my dear home. Do thou, seer, repeat a third hymn'. He saying ' This is food,' recited the thousand bṛhatī verses. Thus he went to Indra's dear home. Indra said to him, ' Seer, thou hast come to my dear home. I give thee a boon.' He said, " Let me know thee.' Indra said, ' I am breath ; thou, seer, art breath ; all creatures are breath ; he that shines is breath. In this form, I pervade all the quarters. This my food is my friend, my support. This is the food of Viśvāmitra. I am he that shines.' Thus said he."[73]

The Āraṇyaka proceeds to describe the importance of the thousand bṛhatīs. " The consonants are the body, the vowels the souls, the sibilants the breath. Knowing this he became Vasiṣṭha (' most excellent '). Thence took he the name.

69. Edited with introduction, translation, notes etc. by A. B. Keith, Anecdota Oxoniensia, 1909 Oxford.

70. I.2.2. RV III 47 is composed by Viśvāmitra (Tadu Vaiśvāmitram). I 4.2. Vasiṣṭha's name is associated with the Sūdadohas verse, and again with the Virāj verses (I 5.2)—Virājaḥ śamsatyannam vai virājo'nnādyasyāvaruddhyai / Vāsiṣṭhena paridadhāti Vasiṣṭho'sānīti /

71. Tadu Vaiśvāmitram viśvasya ha vai mitram Viśvāmitra āsa / Viśvam hāsmai mitram bhavati ya evam veda yeṣām caivam vidvān etaddhotā śamsati / I 2.2. This hymn is comopsed by Viśvāmitra. Now Viśvāmitra was the friend of all, and all is the friend of him who knows this and of those for whom a Hotṛ priest, who knows this, recites this hymn (RV III 47). Again in a later chapter : Tasyedam viśvam mitram āsīd yad idam kiñca tad yad asyedam viśvamitram āsīd yad idam kiñca tasmād Viśvāmitras tasmād Viśvāmitra ityācakṣata etam eva santam / (II 2.1). " Because all whatsoever was his friend, therefore he is Viśvāmitra. Therefore they call him who is (prāṇa) Viśvāmitra."

72. Tam devā abruvannayam vai naḥ sarveṣām Vasiṣṭha iti tasmād Vasiṣṭhas tasmād Vasiṣṭha ityācakṣata etam eva santam / II 2.2. " The gods speak to him, ' Let him be the richest of us all.' Because the gods spake to him, ' Let him be the richest of us all,' therefore he is Vasiṣṭha. Therefore they call him who is (prāṇa) Vasiṣṭha."

73. Viśvāmitram hyetad ahaḥ śamsiṣyantam Indra upaniṣasāda / Sa hānnam ityabhivyāhṛtya bṛhatīsahasram śaśamsa tenendrasya priyam dhāmopeyāya / Tam Indra uvāca ṛṣe priyam vai me dhāmopāgāḥ sa vā ṛṣe dvitīyam śamseti / Sa hānnam ityevābhivyāhṛtya bṛhatīsahasram śaśamsa tenendrasya priyam dhāmopeyāya / Tam Indra uvāca ṛṣe priyam vai me dhāmopāgāḥ sa vā ṛṣe tṛtīyam śamsati / Sa hānnam ityevābhivyāhṛtya bṛhatīsahasram śaśamsa tenendrasya priyam dhāmopeyāya / Tam Indra uvāca ṛṣe priyam vai me dhāmopāgā varam dadāmīti / Sa hovāca tvām eva jānīyām iti / Tam Indra uvāca Prāṇo vā aham asmyṛṣe prāṇas tvam prāṇas sarvāṇi bhūtāni prāṇo hyeṣa ya eṣa tapati sa etena rūpeṇa sarvā diśo viṣṭo'smi tasya me'nnam mitram dakṣiṇam tad Vaiśvāmitram eṣa tapann evāsmīti hovāca // II 2.3. (Ait. Āraṇyaka).

Indra proclaimed this to Viśvāmitra, Indra proclaimed this to Bharadvāja, so Indra is in sacrifices invoked by him as a friend."[74]

3. The *Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa*[75] presents Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra in much the same manner as the AB and Ait. Ā. Viśvāmitra is identified with Vāc (Speech) —Vāg vai Viśvāmitraḥ;[76] and is associated with certain puronuvākyas, praiṣas and anupraiṣas.[77] Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are together associated with certain invocations.[78] Vasiṣṭha by himself too is mentioned in connection with several group invocations.[79] But noteworthy is what is referred to as Vasiṣṭha-yajña. It is a sacrifice performed by Vasiṣṭha in order to avenge the death of his son (Śakti) or sons, caused by the Saudāsas.

> Vasiṣṭho'kāmayata[80] hataputraḥ prajāyeya prajayā paśubhir abhi Saudāsān bhaveyam iti sa etam yajñakratum apaśyad Vasiṣṭhayajñam tam āharat tenāyajata teneṣṭvā prājāyata prajayā paśubhir abhi Saudāsān abhavat tatho evaitad yajamāno yad Vasiṣṭhayajñena yajate prajāyate prajayā paśubhir abhi dviṣato bhrātṛvyān bhavati //

' When his sons were killed, Vasiṣṭha desired : ' I should propagate and should, with progeny and cattle, defeat the Saudāsas'. Then he saw this sacrifice, conceived the Vasiṣṭhayajña, with that he sacrificed and, having sacrificed propagated, and then with progeny and cattle defeated the Saudāsas. Thus if a sacrificer sacrifices according to Vasiṣṭhayajña, he will propagate and with progeny and cattle will conquer the enemies'.

4. The *Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka*[81] refers, principally,[82] to the incident of Viśvāmitra receiving revelation from Indra: a fact borne out by other texts as well.[83]

" Viśvāmitra indeed went to the dear home of Indra by reason of recitation and the performance of vows. To him, said Indra, ' Viśvāmitra, choose a boon '.

74. Tad vā idam bṛhatīsahasram sampannam tasya yāni vyañjanāni taccharīram yo ghoṣaḥ sa ātmā ya ūṣmāṇaḥ sa prāṇaḥ / Etaddha sma vai tad vidvān vasiṣṭho Vasiṣṭho babhūva tata etan nāmadheyam lebhe / Etad u haivendro Viśvamitrāya provācaitadu haivendro Bharadvājāya provāca tasmāt sa tena bandhunā yajñeṣu hūyate // II 2.4.

75. Ed. Ānandāśrama Series, No. 65.

76. Śāṅkh. B. X 5, XV.1, XXIX. 3.

77. Ibid., also XXBIII 1,2.

78. Śāṅkh. B XXVI. 14, XXVIII. 10 etc.

79. Compare *e.g.* Vāsiṣṭham ājyam Vāsiṣṭham pṛṣṭham (XXII.7), Vāsiṣṭhaḥ praugaḥ (XXV.2, XXVI.15), Vāsiṣṭham āprīsūktam (XXV.10) etc.

80. Ibid. IV.8.

81. Text. Ānandāśrama Series No. 90. Translation by A. B. Keith. Oriental Translation Fund Series, No.18, RAS, 1908.

82. Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha are as usual associated with certain hymns and formulas. *vide* II 7,16. The name Vasiṣṭha occurs again in IX 2 but appears to have been used in its adjectival sense. Yo ha vai vasiṣṭhām veda vasiṣṭho ha svānām bhavati vāg vai vasiṣṭhā /—" He who knows the most excellent becomes the most excellent among his own (people). Speech indeed is the most excellent."

83. Compare, for instance, Ait. Ā. II 2.4 supra.

Viśvāmitra said ' Let me know thee'. ' (choose) again'. ' Thee only'. ' (choose) a third time'. ' Thee only'. To him said Indra ' I am the great (m) and the great (f), the god and the goddess, the Brahman and the Brāhmaṇī'. Viśvāmitra was still feign to know more. To him said Indra, ' I am that which I have said, but what is more, he that performs no penance may be even such as I am'. Then indeed did Indra proclaim the vyāhṛtis. They sufficed for him."[84]

The last section of the book gives a long line of Teachers from whom tradition was handed down. The list is interesting not only for many renowned names of ancient tradition but also for the light it throws upon the chronological relationship of those eminent personalities. It is significant that Vasiṣṭha does not find a place in this series. Perhaps he represents another school. Viśvāmitra receives the knowledge directly from Indra and is removed from Brahman only by three generations.

Says the author of the Āraṇyaka—we have learnt it from Guṇākhya Śāṅkhāyana, Guṇākhya Śāṅkhāyana from Kahola Kauṣītaki, Kahola Kauṣītaki from Uddālaka Āruṇi, Uddālaka Āruṇi from Priyavrata Saumāpi, Priyavrata Saumāpi from Somapa, Somapa from Soma Prātiveśya, Soma Prātiveśya from Prativeśya, Prativeśya from Bṛhaddiva, Bṛhaddiva from Sumnayu, Sumnayu from Uddālaka, Uddālaka from Viśvamanas, Viśvamanas from Vyaśva, Vyaśva from Sākamaśva Devarāta, Devarāta from Viśvāmitra, Viśvāmitra from Indra, Indra from Prajāpati, Prajāpati from Brahman, Brahman (n) is self-existent. Honour to Brahman, honour to Brahman.[85]

5. In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, as elsewhere, the sages Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha are symbolised as Ear (śrotra)[86]. and Breath (prāṇa)[87] respectively. The context is the construction of the first layer in the building of the sacred

84. Śāṅkh. Ā. I.6. " Viśvāmitro ha vā Indrasya priyam dhāmopajagāma śastreṇa ca vratacaryayā tam hendra uvāca Viśvāmitra varam vṛṇīṣveti sa hovāca Viśvāmitras tvām eva vijānīyām iti dvitīyam iti tvām eveti tṛ yam iti tvām eveti tam hendra uvāca mahāmśca mahatī cāsmi devaśca devī cāsmi brahma ca brāhmanī cāsmīti tata u ha Viśvāmitro vijijñāsām eva cakre tam hendra uvācaitad vā aham asmi yad etad avocam yad vā kṛṣeto bhūyo'tapas tad eva tat syādaham iti tad vā Indro vyāhṛtīr ūce tā upāptā āsannityathopanidhāya preṅkhaphalakam trirabhyam nyatrirabhyavan iti //

85. Ibid XV. Namo Brahmaṇe nama Ācāryebhyo Guṇākhyāc Chāṅkhāyanād asmābhir adhītam Guṇākhyaś Śāṅkhāyanaḥ Kaholāt Kauṣītakeḥ Kaholaḥ Kauṣītakir Uddālakād Āruṇer Uddālaka Āruṇiḥ Priyavratāt Somāpeḥ Priyavratas Somāpis Somapāt Somapas Somāt Prātiveśyāt somah Prātiveśyah Prātiveśyāt Prativeśyo Bṛhaddivād Bṛhaddivas Sumnayos Sumnayur Uddālakād Uddālako Viśvamanaso Viśvamanā Vyaśvād Vyaśvas Sākamaśvāt Sākamaśvo Devarātād Devarāto Viśvāmitrād Viśvāmitra Indrād Indraḥ Prajāpateḥ Prajāpatir Brahmaṇo Brahmā Svayambhūr namo Brahmaṇe namo Brahmaṇe //

86. ŚB 8.1.2.6—Śrotram vai Viśvāmitra ṛṣir yad anena sarvataś śṛṇotyatho yad asmai sarvato mitram bhavati tasmācchrotram Viśvāmitra ṛṣiḥ. (Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa ed. Albrecht Weber. Berlin 1855 with extracts from the commentaries of Sāyaṇa, Harisvāmin and Dviveda Ganga etc. Text editions have been recently brought out in Benares (Kasi Sanskrit Series 127, 1937 etc.) and in Bombay (Lakshmi-Venkatesvar Steam Press, 1940). See Dandekar's Vedic Bibliography. ŚB was translated by Julius Eggeling in SBE volumes 12, 26, 41, 43 and 44, the last protion known as the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (XIV 4-9) being left out.)

87. ŚB 8.1.1.6—Prāṇo vai Vasiṣṭha ṛṣir yad vai nu śreṣṭhs tena Vasiṣṭho'tho yad vastṛtamo vasati teno eva Vasiṣṭhaḥ.

fire-altar. Secondly, they are among the Seven Sages (saptarṣis) representing the seven vitals *viz.* two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and the mouth, which together constitute the prāṇas.[88]

Sage Vasiṣṭha is specially glorified inasmuch as he knew the Virāj, even 'Indra coveted it' and desired to know the same from the sage. Vasiṣṭha communicated the same to him and in return obtained the knowledge of the expiation for the whole Soma sacrifice. For some time, indeed, " the Vasiṣṭhas alone knew these utterances, whence only one of the Vasiṣṭha family became the Brahman priest. But since nowadays anybody may study them, anybody may now become Brahman."[89]

Otherwise, the term Vasiṣṭha is several times used in an attributive sense. There is, for example, reference to Vasiṣṭha-yajña (excellent sacrifice) which Prajāpati performs in order to propagate mankind.[90] Agni is the guardian of undisturbed rites and the most wealthy (vasiṣṭhaḥ).[91] Speech is, indeed, an excellent thing (vāg vai vasiṣṭhā).[92]

Thus, the mention of the office of the Brahman priest being thrown open to all who know the job proves the posteriority of the Śatapatha to the Taittirīya. And be it noted that even at such a late period, the special importance of the Vasiṣṭhas was recognised and no ill-will expressed. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are alike members of the priestly hierarchy.

6. The *Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa*[93] of the Sāmaveda, also known as Tāṇḍya-mahābrāhmaṇa, records something of value which throws light on the personal history of the two sages, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. Besides, they, being among

88. ŚB XIV 5.2.6—Prāṇā vā ṛsayaḥ...Imāveva Viśvāmitra-Jamadagnī...imāveva Vasiṣṭha Kaśyapau. Dviveda Ganga explains the sevenfold prāṇa as : cakṣurdvayam nāsikādvayam śrotradvayam mukham iti sapta (prāṇāḥ) p. 1126 Weber's edn.

89. ŚB XII 6.1.38-41—Tā Brahmaiva juhuyāt nābrahmā...Vasiṣṭho ha virājam vidām cakāra tām hendro'bhidadhyau // Sa hovāca / Ṛṣe Virājam ha vai vettha tām me brūhīti sa hovāca kim mama tataḥ syād iti sarvasya ca te yajñasya prāyaścittim brūyām rūpam ca tvā darśayeyeti sa hovāca yannu me sarvasya yajñasya prāyaścittim brūyāḥ kimu sa syād yam tvam rūpam darśayethā iti jīvasvarga evāsmāllokāt preyād iti // Tato haitām ṛṣir Indrāya Virājam uvāca / Iyam vai virāḍ iti tasmād yo'syai bhūyiṣṭham labhate sa eva śreṣṭho bhavati // Atha haitām Indra ṛṣaye / Prāyaścittim uvācāgnihotrād agra ā mahata ukthāt tā ha smaitāḥ purā vyāhṛtīr Vasiṣṭhā eva vidus tasmāddha sma purā Vāsiṣṭha eva Brahmā bhavati yatas tvenā/ apyetarhi ya eva kaś cādhīte tato ' pyetarhi ya eva kaśca Brahmā bhavati sa ha vai Brahmā bhavitum arhati sa vā Brahmann ityāmantritaḥ pratiśṛṇuyād ya evametā vyāhṛtīr veda //

90. ŚB II 4.4.2—Prajāpatir vā etenāgre yajñeneje / Prajākāmo bahuḥ prajayā paśubhiḥ syām Śriyam gaccheyam yaśaḥ syām annādaḥ syām iti // Sa vai dakṣo nāma / Tad yad enena so'gre'yajata tasmād dākṣāyaṇayajño nāma, utainam eke Vasiṣṭhayajña ityācakṣate. Contrast Śāṅkh. B. IV 8, where Vasiṣṭhayajña is that performed by sage Vasiṣṭha to avenge the death of his son or sons. See Supra section (3), p.

91. ŚB VI 4.2.7—adabdhavratapramatir Vasiṣṭhaḥ (Agniḥ).

92. ŚB XIV 9.2.2—Vāg vai Vasiṣṭhā same Khaṇḍa 7—Ko no vasiṣṭha iti (' which of us is best ' ś),—14—Vāg uvāca yad vāham vasiṣṭhāsmi,—3.4—Vasiṣṭhāyai svāhā.

93. Text with Sāyaṇa's commentary: Kashi Sanskrit Series, No. 105 in two parts, Benares 1935. Ed. A Chinnaswami Sastri. English Translation by Dr. W. Caland in Bibliotheca Indica, No. 255, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1931.

the foremost in the priestly ranks, are credited with the seership of several sāmans in connection with various sacrificial rites.

Thus the 'Krośa'-sāman is attributed to Viśvāmitra "By this (sāman), forsooth, Indra (once upon a time) at Indra-krośa yelled : 'Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni, here are cows'. The Krośa is applied for gaining cattle."[94]

> "Krośam bhavati / Etena vā Indra Indrakrośe Viśvāmitra-Jamadgnī imā gāva ityākrośat paśūnām avarudhyai Krośam kriyate."

Similarly, the Rohita-kūlīya-sāma which is to win victory in battle. A legend is related in this connection.[95] Viśvāmitra once upon a time went with the cart-train of the Bharatas. He made a wager with certain fellows, the Adanti by name, 'Ye shall win for me this wealth, ye shall fill these carts for me, if these two ruddy ones shall drive up the bank this cart laden with stones.' He thereupon saw these two sāmans ; by means of these, having yoked them, he drove them forward and won the wager.

> "Rohita-kūlīyam bhavatyājijityāyai / Etena vai Viśvāmitro rohitābhyām rohitakūla ājim ajayat / Viśvāmitro Bharatānām manas satyā ayāt so'dantibhir nāma janatāyām śam prāsyate mām mām yūyam astikām jayāthemāni mahyam pūrayātha yadīmāvidam rohitāvaśmācitam kūlam udvahata iti sa ete sāmanī apaśyat tābhyām yuktvā prasedhat so udajayat //" (PB XIV 3.11-13).

94. PB XIII 5.14-15. Caland adduces a legend in this connection culled from the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa (in Auswahl edited by himself, III 237). 'The Bharatas once upon a time were on one bank of the Sindhu hard pressed by the Ikṣvākus. With them (*i.e.* the Bharatas) stayed Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni. Now Indra asked of Bhayada, son of King Asamāti, the two bay steeds which the gods had given him as gift. He did not give them to him. These not having been given, he (Indra) called at Indrakrośa and said "Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni, acquire ye these cows of the Ikṣvākus." These two being on the opposite bank heard this. They said to the Bharatas, 'Indra calls unto us, acquire ye these cows of the Ikṣvākus, come along let us acquire them.' They answered 'Then make you two this Sindhu fordable for us.' 'Then yoke ye your horses.' They yoked and descended into the river. Then these two said, 'Throw away all your palpūlanīs.' They threw them away. Now a rājanyabandhu, who possessed a palpūlanī bound it beneath the axle of his chariot. Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni wished, "May this (Sindhu) be fordable for us." Viśvāmitra saw this sāman and landed with it. They came into the river addressing these verses (RV I 11.4-6) and respectfully approached the water. The stream became fordable and they crossed. ...These two having passed behind the cows of the Ikṣvākus hemmed them in front and acquired the cattle. The legend bears a striking similarity to the famous crossing of the Rivers by Sudās, with the help of Viśvāmitra who made the rivers fordable at the confluence of Vipāś and Śutudrī (*cf.* RV III 33).—*Vide* Caland's translation, p. 324 f.

95. PB XIV 3.11-13. Caland again cites the corresponding version from JB (in Auswahl, III 188) which runs 'Viśvāmitra, in the company of the waggon-train of the Bharatas, encountered the Mahāvṛṣas. Now there was either on the Gaṅgā or the Yamunā, a high, steep bank at the oppoiste side. Said the Mahāvṛṣas, "which forsooth, are now those two draught-oxen that will be able to drive up such a high, steep bank ? " Viśvāmitra answered, "These two ruddy ones of mine." Said the Mahāvṛṣas, "Let us make a wager, if the draught-oxen will drive up this bank, thou shalt fill the cart with wares, but if they do not drive up we shall win thy wares." He agreed to this. The oxen were yoked to a cart laden with barley or rice. Viśvāmitra wished, "May I win the race," and saw these two sāmans and drove them on. The oxen reached the opposite bank, so Viśvāmitra won the race... And because he had won at the bank (kūla) by means of his two ruddy ones (rohita), therefore these two sāmans are called Rohita-kūlīyas.'—*Vide* Caland, p. 354 f.

The first reference to Viśvāmitra's association with a kingdom as its lord is met with in this Brāhmaṇa. He is said to have performed a four-day rite called 'Sañjaya,' to obtain victory. "The Jahnus and the Vṛcīvats quarrelled for the possession of the kingdom. Viśvāmitra, the king of the Jahnus saw this rite and practised it. He got the kingdom, the others were deprived of it. One who has a rival should perform it. He who knows this succeeds himself and his rival is defeated."

> " ......Viśvāmitrasya sañjayaḥ / Jahnu-Vṛcīvanto rāṣṭra āhimsanta sa Viśvāmitro Jāhnavo Rājaitam apaśyat sa rāṣṭram abhavad arāṣṭram itare / Bhrātṛvyavān yajeta / Bhavatyātmanā parā'sya bhrātṛvyo bhavati ya evam veda " // (PB XXI 12.1-4).

The sage Vasiṣṭha, likewise, saw a number of sāmans. The famous Rathantara is assigned to him. Having concentrated all its greatness, Vasiṣṭha chanted it and went to the world of heaven.

> " Tasya Vasiṣṭho mahimno vinidhāya tena stutvā
> svargam lokam ait tān sambhṛtyodgāyet " /[96]

A certain Vasiṣṭha, son of Vīḍu praised with a sāman seen by the sage Vasiṣṭha, and succeeded in getting a glimpse of heaven.

> " Vāsiṣṭham bhavati / Vasiṣṭho vā etena Vaidavah
> stutvāñjasā savrgam lokam apaśyat ... "[97]

Another sāman dear to Vasiṣṭha or one that endeared the sage is mentioned. That sāman, in fact, enabled Vasiṣṭha to win Indra's favour. And he, who in praising applies the Vasiṣṭha-sāman, wins the favour of the deities.

> " Vasiṣṭhasya priyam bhavati / Etena vai
> Vasiṣṭha Indrasya premāṇam agacchat premāṇam
> devatānām gacchati Vāsiṣṭhena tuṣṭuvānaḥ... "[98]

Nihava-sāman is another contribution of the sage Vasiṣṭha, who on that account became a special favourite of Indra. It is like this : Once upon a time " the seers did not see Indra face to face. Vasiṣṭha desired : 'How may I see Indra face to face ?' He saw this Nihava-sāman and, thereupon, he saw Indra face to face. Indra said to him : 'I will tell thee a brāhmaṇa so that the Bharatas, having thee as their chaplain, may be multiplied, but do not disclose me to the other seers'. He told him those stomabhāgas (sāman-groups), and,

96. PB VII 7-18. Sāyaṇa : tasya rathantarasya mahimno māhātmyāni viprakīrṇāni vinidhāya viśeṣeṇaikatra sthāpya. Contrast Caland's tr. " having distributed its greatness." The māhātmyas are indicated in the next sentence of the text—Yaste goṣu mahimā yaste apsu rathe vā te stanayitnau ya u te yaste agnau mahimā tena sambhava Rathantara draviṇavanna edhi // Ibid, VII 19.

97. PB XI 8.13-14.

98. PB XII 12.9-10 *cf.* also XV 8.33.

thereupon, the Bharatas, having Vasiṣṭha as their chaplain, were multiplied. This sāman is associated with Indra."

> Ṛṣyao vā Indram pratyakṣam nāpaśyan sa Vasiṣṭho'kāmayata katham Indram pratyakṣam paśyeyam iti sa etan nihavam apaśyat tato vai sa Indram pratyakṣam apaśyat; sa enam abravīd brāhmaṇam te vakṣyāmi yathā tvatpurohitā Bharatāḥ prajaniṣyante'tha mā'nyebho ṛṣibhyo mā pravoca iti tasmā etān stomabhāgān abravīt tato vai Vasiṣṭhapurohitā Bharatāḥ prājāyanta sendram vā etat sāma yad etat sāma bhavati sendratvāya //[99]

But, apart from these distinguishing contributions to the efficacy of the sacrificial rites, on the part of Vasiṣṭha, he is oftentimes represented as having been afflicted by the death of his son Śakti or of a hundred sons as later legend puts it. In his sad bereavement he saw sāmans and performed rites not only to console himself but also to avenge the son's death which was alleged to have been caused by the sons or descendants of Sudās (Saudāsas), under the instigation of Viśvāmitra. Thus Vasiṣṭha saw the pragātha: "Índra krátum na ā bhara" (RV VII 32.26) and then became rich in progeny and cattle. This pragātha is for the sake of obtaining progeny.

> ' Indra kratum na ābhareti pragātho bhavati /
> Vasiṣṭho vā etam putrahato'paśyat sa prajayā
> paśubhiḥ prājāyata yad eṣa pragātho bhavati prajātyai" //[100]

For the same reason *viz.* the death of the son and towards the same end *viz.* progeny and cattle, does Vasiṣṭha in another context see what is known as Janitra-sāman, constituting two chants: The janitra is said to come under a more comprehensive category called the Brahma-sāman.

> " Vasiṣṭhasya Janitram prajākāmāya Brahmasāma kuryāt /
> Vasiṣṭho vā etat putrahatas sāmāpaśyat
> sa prajayā paśubhiḥ prājāyata yad etat sāma bhavati
> prajātyai " //[101]

Finally Vasiṣṭha saw a four-day rite called catūrātra and practised it whereby he relieved himself of the sense of defeat and humiliation caused by his son's death.

99. PB XV 5.24. *cf.* also PB V 4.5. The same legend in TS III 5.2. and KS XXXVII 17. Bharatas are an ancient clan. According to the Nighaṇṭu, the term is counted among ṛtvik names (Nigh. III 18.1), Supra note 3.

100. PB IV 7.3. On the pragātha mentioned, compare Sarvā. (p. 25) which says: Saudāsair agnau prakṣipyamāṇaḥ Śaktir antyam pragātham ālebhe (ārebhe) so'rdharca ukte'dahyata / tam putroktam Vasiṣṭhah samāpayateti Śāṭyāyanakam Vasiṣṭhasya eva hataputrasyārṣam iti tāṇḍakam // The Tāṇḍaka (*i.e.* PB IV 7.3) in question, evidently, goes a step forward and says that the bereaved sage saw this pragātha to make up for the loss, as at were, by obtaining progeny. The legend is alluded to in other texts as well: *cf.* KS XII 10. TS II 5.2.1, VII 4.7.1 etc.

101. PB VIII 2.3-4. *Vide* Caland's observation on the Brahmasāman. *cf.* the corresponding legend narrated in JB. described by H. Oertal in JAOS XVIII p. 47 f. (1897).

This coupled with Vasiṣṭha's two Janitra-sāmans will elevate the man in distress from position to position and bring him progeny as well :

> " Vasiṣṭhaḥ putrahato hīna ivāmanyata sa etam apaśyat so'gram paryaid yo hīna iva manyeta sa etena yajeta / Yat stomāt stomam abisaṅkrāmatyagrādevāgram rohati Vasiṣṭhasya Janitre bhavataḥ prajātyai // "[102]

Thus, the Pañcavimśa Brāhmaṇa records the high celebrity attained by Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. A certain amount of personal history of these sages is provided inasmuch as in the one case the son's death had had a profound effect upon the father, and in the other, Viśvāmitra's kingship of the Jahnus has been expressed and a not inconsistent martial and sportive spirit clearly illustrated by the Indrakrośa and Rohitakūla incidents. One may still wonder, with the background of the Samhitā-evidence, whether the kingship of the Jahnus still proves the rājanyatva of Viśvāmitra : *i.e.* whether Viśvāmitra belonged to the Kṣatriya-varṇa. It looks as if that the four varṇas had not yet become water-tight compartments. There is again, no reference to the sages' mutual hostility. Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni are friends, a fact borne out by RV also.[103]

7. In the *Jaiminīya or Talavakāra Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa*,[104] Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra figure with equal importance. The Uktha is said to belong to Viśvāmitra. " Verily, food is all (viśva) and breath is friend (mitra). Now Viśvāmitra through exertion, through penance, through the performance of vows went unto the dear abode of Indra. And he proclaimed to him that which has come to man here. Now he went for instruction (saying) ' Light is this uktha'. ' Light (jyotis) has two syllables, breath (prāṇa) has two, food (anna) has two. That same is firmly established in food. Then Jamadagni went for instruction to him (saying) ' Life (āyus) is this uktha. Life (āyus) has two syllables, breath two, food two. That same is firmly established in food. Then Vasiṣṭha went for instruction to him (saying) ' The cow (gauḥ) is this uktha. That same is just food. For the cow is food."

> ' Tad etad Vaiśvāmitram uktham / Tad annam vai viśvam prāṇo mitram / Taddha Viśvāmitraḥ śrameṇa tapasā vratacaryeṇendrasya priyam dhāmopajagāma / Tasmā u haitat provāca yad idam manuṣyān āgatam /

102. PB XXI 11.2-3. along with Ibid. VIII 2.3-4 and XIX 3.8 Vasiṣṭhasya Janitre bhavato Vasiṣṭho vā ete putrahatas sāmanī apaśyat sa prajayā paśubhiḥ prājāyata yad ete sāmanī bhavataḥ prajātyai //

103. *cf.* RV III 53.16, X 167.4.

104. Text (in Roman), translation (English) and notes : by Hanns Oertel. American Oriental Society (Journal Vol. XVI Part I, 1894). Text in Devanāgarī ed. Pandit Rama Deva (Lahore : Dayānanda Sanskrit Series 3) with an essay in Hindi on the history of Sāmaveda Literature by Pandit Bhagavad Datta, 1921. The credit of first bringing into light the JB goes to Dr. H. Oertel who subsequently wrote on the ' Contributions from the JB to the History of the Brāhmaṇa Literature ' (*Vide* JAOS XVIII etc.).

Taddha sa upaniṣasāda jyotir etad uktham iti / Jyotir iti dve akṣare prāṇa iti dve annam iti dve / Tad etad anna eva pratiṣṭhitam / Atha hainam Jamadagnir upaniṣasāda āyur etad uktham iti / Āyur iti dve akṣare prāṇa iti dve annam iti dve / Tad etad anna eva pratiṣṭhitam / Atha hainam Vasiṣṭha upaniṣasāda gaur etad uktham iti / Tad etad annam eva / Annam hi gauḥ / "[105]

Viśvāmitra went to the abode of Indra through exertion, penance and vows (śrameṇa tapasā vratacaryeṇa) may not be without significance in view of the elaboration of this process in the Rāmāyaṇa, of course with much colour and conceit added.

Again, "Indra said the uktha to Viśvāmitra (saying that it is Speech: Vāc). Therefore the descendants of Viśvāmitra worship Speech only. Manu ordained brahman-hood to Vasiṣṭha. Therefore they say, Brahman belongs to Vasiṣṭha. This also they say, one knowing thus is a brahman-priest ; and who is equal to a Vāsiṣṭha knowing thus? "

"Vāg iti hendro Viśvāmitrāyoktham uvāca / Tad etad Viśvāmitrā upāsate vācam eva / Manur ha Vasiṣṭhāya brahmatvam uvāca / Tasmād āhur vāsiṣṭham eva brahmeti / Tad u vā āhur evamvid eva brahmā / Ka u evamvidam Vāsiṣṭham arhatīti / "[106]

Vasiṣṭha is said to promote progeny by means of an after-verse (anumantra) of the stomabhāga, and by reciting it he did obtain abundant progeny and cattle.

"Athaiṣa Vasiṣṭhasyaikastomabhāgānumantraḥ tena haitena Vasiṣṭhaḥ prajātikamo'numantrayām cakre ...tato vai sa bahuḥ prjayā paśubhiḥ prājāyata " //[107]

8. The *Saḍvimśa Brāhmaṇa*[108] describes how Indra imparted the Uktha to Viśvāmitra and Brahma to Vasiṣṭha ; Speech (Vāk) is Uktha and Mind (manas) is Brahma. Mind and Speech are invaluable assets to Sacrifice and its technique. Even so, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are central figures in propounding and perfecting the sacrificial cult. Mind and Speech are further graphically represented as the two ruts of the wheels of the chariot namely the Sacrifice.

"Indro ha vai Viśvāmitrāyoktham uvāca Vasiṣṭhāya brahma, vāg uktham ityeva Viśvāmitrāya mano brahma Vasiṣṭhāya / Tad vā etad Vāsiṣṭham brahma / Api haivamvidam vā Vāsiṣṭham vā brahmāṇam kurvīta / Tad yathobhayavartaninā rathena yām yām diśam prārthayate tām tām abhiprāpnotyevam etenobhayavartaninā yajñena yam kāmayate tam abhyaśnute " /[109]

105. JUBr. III 8.6-18.
106. JUBr III 1-3.
107. Ibid., III 18.6.
108. Ed. W. H. Julius with commentary entitled Vijñāpanabhāṣya.
109. Sad B. I 5.

Just as a person seated on a chariot can go in a required direction, so also a person performing a sacrifice will obtain the desired object.[110]

9. The *Gopatha Brāhmaṇa*[111] of the Atharvaveda speaks of the penance performed by various sages. Vasiṣṭha is said to have done it in two places in the midst of the River Vipāś, the places being known as Vasiṣṭha-śilā and Kṛṣṇa-śilā. Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni did penance in a place called Jāmadagna; Agastya in Agastya-tīrtha[112] etc. Indra's special favour to Vasiṣṭha inasmuch as he revealed to him the stomabhāgas has been described in term similar to those in the Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa.[113] Vasiṣṭha's name is further associated with the hiṅkāra which is sacred to the sacrifice.[114] Sacrifice itself is guarded by the different sages: Vāmadeva guarded it in the South, Vasiṣṭha in the middle, Bharadvāja in the North and Viśvāmitra on all sides. Hence Maitrāvaruṇa will not swerve from Vāmadeva, Bhāhmaṇācchamsin will not swerve from Vasiṣṭha, Acchāvāka will not from Bharadvāja; and all will stand by Viśvāmitra. Thus do the seers zealously guard the sacrifice.[115] Finally, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are mentioned as the seers of Sampāta hymns, while a kind of plagiarism is ascribed to Vāmadeva who appropriated the sampātas first seen by Viśvāmitra for himself, whereupon the latter saw fresh ones ![116]

It will be seen from the above that the Gopatha Brāhmaṇa does not perpetrate the so-called tradition of an hostility between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. On the contrary both of them are represented as quite friendly in the domain of sacrifice. People have faith in both and look upon them with respect. And what is more, both are god's favourites.

110. The same idea is well desribed in JUBr. III 16:
ayam vāva yajño yoyam pavate / Tasya vāk ca manaś ca hyeṣa etan ṃanasā ca vartate / Tasya hotādhvaryur udgātetyanyatarām vācā vartanim samskurvanti / Tasmāt te vācā kurvanti / Brahmaiva manasā anyatarām / Tasmāt sa tūṣṇīm āste //
The sacrifice rests on Speech and Mind. These are the two ruts on which the sacrifice proceeds. The three priests, hotṛ, adhvaryu and udgātṛ, look after one of them by means of speech (because they recite aloud the praises and the chants), whereas the Brahman priest contemplates upon the other in mind only; hence he remains silent. He is responsible for the flawless performance of the rites; therefore he silently but vigilantly supervises the work of all the others.

111. Das Gopatha Brāhmaṇa, Herausgegeben von Dr. Dieuke Gaastra (Leiden, 1919). GB text was printed in Calcutta by Jīvānanda Vidyāsāgar in 1891.

112. BG I 2.8. Atha khalu Vipāṇmadhye Vasiṣṭha-śilā nāma prathama āśramo dvitīyaḥ Kṛṣṇaśilās tasmin Vasiṣṭhas samātapat, Viśvāmitra-Jamadagnī Jāmadagne tapataḥ /...Agastyo'gastyatīrthe tapati / etc.

113. Ibid II 2.13. *cf.* PB XV 5.24 which particularises Vasiṣṭha's patronage to the Bharatas, whereas here it is mankind (prajā) in general. *cf* note 3 Supra.

114. Ibid II 3.9. Prajāpatir vai yat prajā asṛjata tā vai tāntā asṛjata / Tā hiṅkāreṇaivābhyajighrat /......Atho khalvāhur maharṣir vā etad yajñasyāgre geyam apaśyat / Tad etad yajñasyāgre geyam yaddhiṅkāras tam devāś ca ṛṣyaś cābruvan Vasiṣṭho'yam astu yo no yajñasyāgre geyam adrāg iti / Tad etad yajñasyāgre geyam yaddhiṅkāras tato vai sa devānām sreṣṭho'bhavat; yena vai śreṣṭhas tena Vasiṣṭhaḥ /

115. Ibid. II 3.23. Devān ha yajñam tanvānān asurarakṣāmsyajighāmsan / Te'bruvan Vāmadevam tvam na imam yajñam dakṣiṇato gopāyeti / Madhyato Vasiṣṭham / Uttarato Bharadvājam / Sarvān anu Viśvāmitram / Tasmān Maitrāvaruṇo Vāmadevānna pracyavate Vasiṣṭhād Brāhmaṇācchamsī Bharadvājād Acchāvākas sarve Viśvāmitrāt / Eta evāsmai tad ṛṣayo'har ahar namagā apramattā yajñam rakṣanti ya evam veda ya evam veda /

116. Ibid II 6.1. which is almost a repetition of AB VI 18-20.

IV

VEDIC ANCILLARIES

1. *Nirukta*

While explaining the name Sarasvatī as Speech and a River, Yāska relates briefly the story of Viśvāmitra and the Rivers.

> Tatretihāsam ācakṣate Viśvāmitra ṛṣiḥ Sudāsaḥ Paijavanasya purohito babhūva / Viśvāmitraḥ sarvamitraḥ ... Sa vittam gṛhītvā Vipātchutudryoḥ sambhedam āyayāv anuyayur itare / Sa Viśvāmitro nadīs tuṣṭāva gādhā bhavateti /[117]

' In that connection they relate a story. The sage Viśvāmitra was priest of king Sudās son of Pijavana. Viśvāmitra was a friend to all. Taking his wealth he came to the confluence of Vipāś and Śutudrī ; others followed ; Viśvāmitra praised the rivers (and prayed) ' Do ye become fordable'.

The circumstances of this miracle are, however, nowhere clearly expresseds Some amplifications may be gleaned from other works. The Bṛhaddevatā tell. us that Viśvāmitra was accompanying Sudās, having been his priest at a sacrifice :

> Purohitas sannijyārtham Sudāsā saha yan ṛṣiḥ /
> Vipāṭchutudryos sambhedam śam ityete uvāca ha //[118]

The Sarvānukramaṇī introduces the hymn (RV III 33) merely as a conversation between the rivers and Viśvāmitra, who was desirous of crossing --Samvādo nadībhir Viśvāmitrasyottitīrṣoḥ.[119] Still the questions remain : whose wealth did Viśvāmitra take ? and who are those others that followed him ? The old texts have no answer to give. Durga however imagines that the wealth was earned by him in his capacity as priest (paurohityopārjitam) ; and that those who followed him were either his attendants or robbers (anuyayur itare tadanuyāyinas taskarā vā). Sāyaṇa, from the above sources reconstructs the story—

> " Purā kila Viśvāmitraḥ Paijavanasya Sudāso rājñaḥ purohito babhūva / Sa ca paurohityena labdhadhanaḥ sarvam dhanam ādāya Vipāṭchutudryoḥ sambhedam āyayāvanuyayur itare / Athottitīrṣur Viśvāmitro' gādhajale te nadyau dṛṣṭvottaraṇārtham ādyābhis tisṛbhis tuṣṭāva " /[120]

" In times of yore Viśvāmitra became the priest of king Sudās son of Pijavana. He, having obtained wealth from his priesthood gathered up all earnings and came to the confluence of Vipāś and Śutudrī ; others followed him. Then desirous of crossing the stream whose waters were deep he praised the rivers to become

117. Nir. II 24 (p. 231 BSS edn.).

118. BD IV 106.

119. Sarvā. ed. Macdonell, p. 15-16. It is strange that Sadguruśiṣya does not narrate the story. He merely repeats the original—Uttitīrṣor Viśvāmitrasya nadībhis saha samvādo'smin sūkte pratipādyate (Ib. p. 106).

120. Sāyaṇa's preface to RV. III 33.

fordable". This warrants a supposition that the people who followed were not friendly; they were perhaps intent on pursuing Viśvāmitra and Sudās who must also have been in the company, as vouchsafed by BD. It is agreed on all accounts, at any rate, that Viśvāmitra was the wonder-worker before whom the rivers gave way.

Yāska does not refer to any hatred between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. His commentator, however, refuses to comment upon the Ṛgvedic verse in which the word " lodham " occurs. " Lodham " is listed up in the Nighaṇṭu as one of the sixty-two words[121] which are known as anavagatas (not-understood). Explaining this word Yāska quotes the Ṛgvedic line—" lodhám nayanti páśu mányamānāḥ "—and says :

lodham " lubdham ṛṣim nayanti paśum manyamānāḥ". Durga upon this quotes the verse (RV III 53.23) in full and then refuses to comment upon it ; because " the verse in which the word occurs is a Vasiṣṭha-hating one ; I am a Kāpiṣṭhala-Vāsiṣṭha ; hence, I do not explain it."[122] This of course, should be regarded as based on a tradition which Yāska did not share.

Yāska refers to the birth of Vasiṣṭha[123] and in that connection comments on the Ṛgvedic verse " Utāsi Maitrā-Varuṇó Vasiṣṭha "[124] Vasiṣṭha is said to be the son of Mitra and Varuṇa who once fell in love with Urvaśī at her very sight (in a sacrifice). Their semen dropped down and was held in a pitcher of water by the Visvedevas. Then Vasiṣṭha was born. The commentator Durga draws attention to the fact that Vasiṣṭha had more than one birth ;[125] this is also supported by Ṛgvedic authority.[126]

Vasiṣṭha's loyalty to Indra along with others *viz.* Parāśara and Śatayātu is stated.[127] An interesting parable[128] is told of how Vasiṣṭha once praised Parjanya for rains. The frogs seconded him, whereby he was pleased and heartily complimented them in the following Ṛk—

Samvatsarám śaśayānā́ Brāhmaṇā́ vratacāríṇaḥ /
Vā́cam Parjányajinvitām prá maṇḍū́kā avādiṣuḥ //[129]

" The frogs pour forth aloud their praise which is pleasing to Parjanya, like Brāhmans after lying the whole year in observance of a vow."

121. Nigh. IV 1.16.

122. Nir. IV. 14 (BSS edn. pp. 380-381) Durga : " Lodham ityetad anavagatam / lubdham ityavagamaḥ / yasmin nigame eṣa śabdaḥ, sā Vasiṣṭha-dveṣinī ṛk /

123. Nir. V 14.

124. RV VII 33.11.

125. Nir. V. 14 Com. p. 525 f. BSS No. 73.

126. *cf.* RV VII 33.10-14.

127. Nir. VI 30. *cf.* RV VII 18.21.

128. Nir. IX 6. Vasiṣṭho varṣakāmaḥ Parjanyam tuṣṭāva / Tam maṇḍūkā anvamodanta / Sa maṇḍūkān anumodamānān dṛṣṭvā tuṣṭāva /

129. RV VII 103.1 *cf.* Nīti. 108, p. 289.

It is said further that Vasiṣṭha, unbale to bear the sorrow of his sons' death, 'ew himself into the river having tied the body with thread. He wanted to ; but the river untied the bonds and he was destined to live. The river was ɜnceforward named as Vipāś :

(Vipāṭ vipāśanād vā) / Pāśā asyām vyapāśyanta
Vasiṣṭhasya mumūrṣataḥ / Tasmād Vipāḍ ucyate /[130]

.e real name of the river is Ārjīkīyā (having its source in the Ṛjīka mountain ; flowing straight); it was formerly known as Uruñjirā (urujalā = full of water).[131]

Finally, Yāska is impressed with the great qualities for which the Vasiṣṭhas re known :[132] "Their glory is like the splendour of the Sun; their greatness vast like that of the ocean ; their swiftness is like that of the Wind and their ıises always inimitable."

Bṛhddevatā

Mitrīkṛtya janā viśve yad imam paryupāsate
Mitra ityāha tenainam Viśvāmitra stuvan svayam //[133]

3ecause all men making friends with him resort to worship therefore Viśvāmitra iend to all) himself praising him calls him Mitra (friend)."

One easily sees here a clue to Viśvāmitra's own name if not his character. .e author of BD appears to commend the sage as a universal friend. Indeed, ıile praising the Sun-god[134] as a friend who urges all men to action as a friend ıo supports both earth and heaven as a friend who is vigilant in regard to the lfare of those who toil (kṛṣṭīḥ), Viśvāmitra undoubtedly may have had the God's ample for his own emulation or guidance ! And we know from the legends ıt he always proved to be a friend of the distressed.

Of the seven names of the Sun, he the God is reupted to have acquired the me Bhaga because the sage Vasiṣṭha praised him so :

Udito bhāsayaṁllokān imāṁś caiṣa svaraśmibhiḥ /
Svayam Vasiṣṭhas tenainam ṛṣir āha stuvan bhagam //[135]

130. Nir. IX 26. Durga expands : Vasiṣṭhaḥ kila mamajjāsyām mumūrṣuḥ putramaraṇa-ɛārtaḥ pāśair ātmānam baddhvā / Tasya kila te pāśā asyām vyapāśyanta vyamucyanta ıkena / Tataḥ prabhṛti Vipāṭ abhavat /

131. The Nirukta context is Yāska's comment on RV X 75.5 (Imám me Gange Yamune .) *vide* Durga's com. on the word-exegesis. BSS Vol. 85 pp. 928-931.

132. Nir. XI 20. Athāpi ṛṣayaḥ stūyante / "Sūryasyeva vakṣatho jyotir eṣām etc." RV I 83.8.

133. BD II 49.

134. *cf.* RV III 59.1. "Mitró jánān yātayati bruvāṇó / Mitró dādhāra pṛthivím utá ım / Mitráḥ kṛṣṭír ánimiṣābhí caṣṭe / Mitrāya havyám ghṛtávaj juhota //. *Vide* Yāska's ɔlanation : Nir X 22. According to Sarvā. the deity of the hymn is Mitra who is generally ntified with Sun (see Sāyaṇa's com.). In the Bṛhaddevatā however it appears to be one of the names of Indra, as pointed out by Macdonell (p. 89 of his Tr.; specially note on v. 82). These names happen to coincide almost with those enumerated in Nigh. V 4 and 5. Therefore Mitra, its derivative sense, may apply to both Indra and the Sun.

135. BD II 62. *cf.* RV VII 41.2-5.

" And he arose illuminating these worlds with his rays : therefore, the seer Vasiṣṭha himself, praising him, calls him Bhaga."

The text of BD refers to Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha in a few contexts which are of no significance indeed for the study of their mutual relationship. Thus the character of the Vaiśvadeva hymns differs from seer to seer.[136] There is narāśaṁsa in Vasiṣṭha's Āprī hymns, while there is praise of Tanūnapāt in Viśvāmitra's.[137] The hymns of several seers are characterised by refrains ; but those of Kutsa differ in this regard from those of Bharadvāja, Gṛtsamada, Vasiṣṭha and others.[138]

That Viśvāmitra was first king and then elevated himself to the position of a Brahmarṣi is first clearly expressed by BD

Praśāsya gām yas tapasābhyagacchat
Brahmarṣitām ekaśatam ca putrān /
Sa Gāthiputras tu jagāda sūktam
Somasya metyāgneyam yat pare ca //[139]

" The son of Gāthi who, after ruling the earth, attained by penance to the position of a Brahman-seer (Brahmarṣi) and obtained a hundred and one sons, uttered the hymn which is addressed to Agni ' Somasya mā ' and the two following." It is well-known that Viśvāmitra saw the whole of the third maṇḍala.

Viśvāmitra's conversation with the River Vipāś and Śutudrī and the successful crossing of their confluence in the company of Sudās have already been considered.[140] We may now pass on to other events of the sage's life.

According to BD, Viśvāmitra was once involved in an incident with the sage Śakti son of Vasiṣṭha, at a great sacrifice performed by Sudās. Viśvāmitra was forcibly deprived of consciousness ; he sank down unconscious. But to him the Jamadagnis gave speech called Sasarparī, daughter of Brahmā or of the Sun, having brought her from the dwelling of the Sun. Then that Speech dispelled Kuśika's loss of intelligence.

Sudāsaś ca mahāyajñe Śaktinā Gāthisūnave /
Nigṛhītam balāccetaḥ so'vasīdad vicetanaḥ /
Tasmai brāhmīm tu Saurīm vā namnā vācam sasarparīm /
Sūryakṣayād ihāhṛtya dadus te Jamadagnayaḥ /
Kuśkānām tatas sā vāg amatim tām apāhanat /[141]

Sage Viśvāmitra goes down to history, as well as his redoubtable adversary Vasiṣṭha, on account of what BD styles as Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ which are four

136. Ibid. II 130-131.
137. Ibid. II 156 where Vasiṣṭha is referred to as Urvaśi's son (Aurvaśa) ; also II 157.
138. Ibid. III 128. *Vide* Macdonell's note on the stanza.
139. BD IV 95.
140. Ibid. IV 105-106. See supra, p. 212 of this.
141. BD IV 112-114. *cf.* RV III 53.15-16.

stanzas seen by Viśvāmitra and which are in the nature of imprecations against the enemy, who is presumed to be Vasiṣṭha. These mantras, though incorporated in the Ṛgveda-saṁhitā, the Vasiṣṭhas do not hear. Great sin attaches to recite or hear them. Those who recite or listen to them will have their heads split into a hundred bits ; their children will die ; hence the said stanzas should not be uttered. The teachers approve of this course.

> Parāś catasro yās tvatra Vasiṣṭhadveṣiṇyas smṛtāḥ /
> Viśvāmitreṇa tāḥ proktā abhiśāpā iti smṛtāḥ /
> Dviṣaddveṣās tu tāḥ proktāḥ vidyāś caivābhicārikāḥ /
> Vasiṣṭhās tānna śṛṇvanti tad ācāryakasammatam /
> Kīrtanācchravaṇād vāpi mahādoṣaś ca jāyate /
> Śatadhā bhidyate mūrdhā kīrtanena śrutena vā /
> Teṣām bālāḥ pramīyante tasmāt tās tu na kīrtayet /[142]

The Bṛhaddevatā commemorates Vasiṣṭha's greatness quite systematically commencing from his very birth. We shall recount the whole pedigree because of its interest. " The son of Prajāpati was Marīci, Marīci's son was the sage Kaśyapa. He had thirteen divine wives, the daughters of Dakṣa : Aditi, Diti, Danu, Kālā, Danāyu, Simhikā, Muni, Krodhā, Viśvā, Vasiṣṭhā. Surabhi, Vinatā and Kadrū by name ; these daughters Dakṣa gave to Kaśyapa. From them, the Gods and Asuras, the Gandharvas, the Serpents, the Rākṣasas, Birds, Piśācas, and other classes of beings were produced. Now among these daughters, the one goddess Aditi produced twelve sons. They were—Bhaga, Aryaman, Amśa, Mitra and Varuṇa, Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ, Vivasvat, Tvaṣṭṛ, Pūṣan, and also Indra ; the twelfth is called Viṣṇu. Thus that pair was born of her namely Mitra and Varuṇa. When they saw the nymph Urvaśī at a sacrificial session, the semen of these two Ādityas was effused. It fell into a jar containing water. Now at that same moment, two vigorous ascetics, the seers Agatsya and Vasiṣṭha, came into being. The semen however, having fallen in varuous ways –in a jar, in water, on the ground—the sage Vasiṣṭha, the best of seers was produced on the ground; while Agastya was produced in the jar, and Matsya, of great brilliance, in the water. Then Agastya, of great glory, arose being the length of a peg only (śamyā). Because he was meted with a measure; he is here called Mānya ; or else (because) the seer was born from a jar. For measurement is made with a jar also ; by jar (kumbha) the designation of a measure of capacity is indicated. Then, as the waters were being taken up, Vasiṣṭha was found standing on a puṣkara (lotus ?). There on every side the Viśvedevas supported the puṣkara. Arising out of that water, Vasiṣṭha then performed great austerity.

" His name arose with reference to his qualities. (guṇataḥ), from the root *vas* expressive of pre-eminence : for he once upon a time, by means of austerity, saw Indra who was invisible to other seers. Indra then proclaimed that he should receive shares in the Soma. This is supported by the Brāhmaṇa passage " Ṛṣayo

142. BD IV 117-120. *cf.* **RV III 53. 21-24.**

vā Indram..." Vasiṣṭha and the Vasiṣṭhas thus became Brāhmans in the Office of Brahman priest, most worthy of fees in all rites and sacrifices. Therefore one should honour with fees all such descendants of Vasiṣṭha who may at any time even today be present at a sacrificial assembly, so says a sacred text of the Bhāllavins."[143]

It becomes clear from the foregoing that the sage Vasiṣṭha was of divine origin, that he was favoured by Indra and that he and his tribe obtained universal recognition as Brahman priests.

Vasiṣṭha's dream is the next important event that BD would relate about him. This topic has been dealt with already in the above pages.[144] That a sage of Vasiṣṭha's eminence could break into another's house or that he had had to starve for three nights and steal into another's house on the fourth for food are surely things that can happen only in a dream ! It has been clearly said to be a dream in BD—' Vasiṣṭhas svapna ācarat '—though Ṣaḍguruśiṣya misses the point and adds colour somewhat thoughtlessly. What, however, is important about the hymn is its magical aspect. It is called 'prasvāpinyupaniṣat', a spell which throws the concerned folk into slumber. Its efficacy as such was tested in the seer's own case !

143. BD. V 143-159.

Prājāpatyo Marīcir hi Mārīcaḥ Kaśyapo muniḥ /
Tasya devyo'bhavan jāyā Dākṣāyaṇyas trayodaśa /
Aditir Ditir Danuḥ Kālā Danāyuṣ Simhikā Muniḥ /
Krodhā Viśvā Variṣṭhā ca Surabhir Vinatā tathā /
Kadrūś caiveti duhitṛḥ Kaśyapāya dadau sa ca /
Tāsu devāsurāś caiva Gandharvoragarākṣasāḥ /
Vayāmsi ca Piśācāś ca jajñire'nyāś ca jātayaḥ /
Tatraikā tvaditir Devī dvādaśājanayat sutān /
Bhagaś caivāryamāmśaś ca Mitro Varuṇa eva ca /
Dhātā caiva Vidhātā ca Vivasvāmśca mahādyutiḥ /
Tvaṣṭā Pūṣā tathaivendro dvādaśo Viṣṇur ucyate /
Dvandvam tasyās tu tajjajñe Mitraś ca Varuṇaś ca ha /
Tayorādityayos satre dṛṣṭvāpsarasam Urvaśīm /
Retaś caskanda tat kumbhe nyapatad vāsatīvare /
Tenaiva tu muhūrtena vīryavantau tapasvinau /
Agastyaś ca Vasiṣṭhaś ca tatrarṣī sambabhūvatuḥ /
Bahudhā patite śukre kalaśe'tha jale sthale /
Sthale Vasiṣṭhas tu munis sambhūta ṛṣisattamaḥ /
Kumbhe tvagastyas sambhūto jale Matsyo mahādyutiḥ /
Udiyāya tato'gastyaś śamyāmātro mahāyaśāḥ /
Mānena sammito yasmāt tasmān Mānya ihocyate /
Yad vā kumbhād ṛṣir jātaḥ kumbhenāpi hi mīyate /
Kumbha ityabhidhānam tu parimāṇasya lakṣyate /
Tato'psu gṛhyamāṇāsu Vasiṣṭhaḥ puṣkare sthitaḥ /
Sarvatra puṣkaram tatra Viśvedevā adhārayan /
Utthāya salilāt tasmād atha tepe mahat tapaḥ /
Nāmāsya guṇato jajñe vasateḥ śraiṣṭhyakarmaṇaḥ /
Adṛśyam ṛṣibhir hīndram so'paśyat tapasā purā /
Somabhāgān atho tasmai provāca harivāhanaḥ /
Ṛṣayo vā Indram iti Brāhmaṇāt taddhi dṛśyate /
Vasiṣṭhaś ca Vasiṣṭhāś ca Brāhmaṇā Brahmakarmaṇi /
Sarvakarmasū yajñeṣu dakṣiṇīyatamās tathā /
Tasmād ye'dyāpi Vāsiṣṭhās sadasyās syus tu karhicit /
Arhayed dakṣiṇābhis tān Bhāllaveyī śrutis tviyam //

144. See supra footnotes 21-28.

A pathetic interest attaches to Vasiṣṭha's bereavement in the death of his sons. Moreover he seems to have been much sinned against; fiends of all sorts oppressed him. BD says—

Ṛṣir dadarśa rākṣoghnam putraśokapariplutaḥ /
Hate putraśate tasmin Saudāsair duḥkhitas tadā /
Ṛṣis tvāśiṣam āśāste mā no rakṣa iti tvṛci /
* * *
Divi caiva pṛthivyām ca tathā pālanam ātmanaḥ/
Ulūkayātum jahyetān nānārūpān niśācarān /
Pañcadaśyām tu sūktasya aṣṭamyām caiva Vāruṇiḥ /
Duḥkhaśokaparītātmā śapate vilapanniva /
Hate putraśate tasmin Vasiṣṭho duḥkhitas tadā /
Rakṣobhūtena śāpāt tu Sudāseneti vai śrutiḥ //[145]

"The seer, when his hundred sons had been slain by the followers of Sudās, full of pain and overwhelmed with grief for his sons, saw this hymn for the destruction of demons. In the stanza 'mā no rakṣaḥ,' the seer invokes a blessing ; and protection in heaven and earth on his own behalf. With " Ulūkayātum " etc., he prays " Slay these night walkers of various froms." In the fifteenth and in the eighth stanzas of the hymn, the son of Varuṇa (Vasiṣṭha), his soul being overwhelmed with pain and grief, utters a curse. Vasiṣṭha was at that time pained, as his hundred sons had been slain by Sudāsa who, in consequence of a curse, had been transformed into a demon (rakṣas) ; such is the sacred tradition." A little discrepancy confronts us here. Vasiṣṭha's hundred sons were killed, no doubt. But by whom ? By the Saudāsas *i.e.* the followers of Sudās according to stazna 28 in the above quotation ; or by Sudāsa transformed as a demon, according to stanza 34. We shall see that this incident gets further complicated in later literature, the epics and the Purāṇas.

3. *Sarvānukramaṇī*

The pedigree of Viśvāmitra given by the Sarvā, is noteworthy :

Kuśikas tvaiṣīrathir Indratulyam putram icchan brahmacaryam cacāra tasyendra eva Gāthī putro jajñe Gāthino Viśvāmitraḥ ; sa tṛtīyam maṇḍalam apaśyat /[146]

Kuśika son of Iṣīratha, desirous of obtaining a son equal to Indra, did penance. Indra himself chose to be his son as Gāthī. Gāthin's son was Viśvāmitra who saw the third Maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda.

145. BD VI 28, 31-34.
146. Sarvā. p. 14. Saḍguruśiṣya expands the same in verse—
Iṣīrathasutas tvāsīt Kuśiko nāma nāmataḥ /
Indratulyas suto me syād itīcchannakarot tapaḥ /
Brahmacaryam tu caratas tasmād Indro'bhyajāyata /
Matsamo'nyo na caiva syād aham evāsya putratām /
Gacchāmi samyagevam syād iti matvā śatakratuḥ /
Sa Gāthī nāma Kuśikād Iṣīrathasutād abhūt /
Indrarūpād Gāthinas tu Viśvāmitro'pi jajñivān /
Tṛtīyam maṇḍalam idam tapasā so'tha dṛṣṭavān //

RV III 33 is just pointed out as having been seen by Viśvāmitra as he was desirous of crossing the river ;[147] the circumstances are not mentioned. So also the two stanzas relating to Sasarparī are indicated without any reference to the connected event.[148] But the commentator supplies the want.

Sasarparīdvṛce prāhur itihāsam purāvidaḥ /
Saudāsanṛpayajñe vai Vasiṣṭhātmaja-Śaktinā /
Viśvāmitrasyābhibhūtam balam vāk ca samantataḥ /
Vāsiṣṭhenābhibhūtas sa hyavāsīdacca Gāthijaḥ /
Tasmai Brāhmīn tu Saurīm vā nāmnā vācam Sasarparīm /
Sūryaveśmana āhṛtya dadur vai Jamadagnayaḥ /
Kuśikānām tatas sā vāg amatim tām apānudat /
Upa preteti Kuśikān Viśvāmitro'nvayojayat /
Labdhvā vācam ca hṛṣṭātmā Jamadagnīn apūjayat /
Sasarparīr iti dvābhyām ṛgbhyām vācam stuvan svayam //[149]

The details are very similar to those given in BD, if not borrowed therefrom.

Viśvāmitra's adoption of Śunaśśepa as the eldest of his sons under a new name Devarāta is of course a great event. While the Bṛhaddevatā is silent about it, Sarvā. refers to it briefly while introducing the Śunaśśepa hymns (RV I 24-30) :

Kasya pañconājīgartiś Sunaśśepas sa kṛtrimo Vaiśvāmitro Devarātaḥ /[150]

The legend however is elaborately narrated by Ṣaḍguruśiṣya;[151] but it is unnecessary to review the same here as it has been done already in the preceding chapter on Śunaśśepa.

The birth of Agastya and Vasiṣṭha is mentioned while introducing the Agastya hymns commencing with RV I.166 :

Mitrā Varuṇayor dīkṣitayor Urvaśīm apsarasam dṛṣṭvā vāsatīvare kumbhe reto'patat tato'gastya-Vasiṣṭhāvajāyetām /[152]

But the incident of Vasiṣṭha's son Śakti being consigned to the fire by the followers of Sudās receives a fuller treatment in the Sarvā. and its commentary. The Sarvā. says :

Saudāsair agnau prakṣipyamāṇaś Śaktir antyam pragātham ālebhe so'rdharca ukte'dahyata / Tam putroktam Vasiṣṭhas samāpayateti Śāṭyāyanakam Vasiṣṭhasaiya hataputrasyārṣam iti Tāṇḍakam /[153]

Ṣaḍguruśiṣya weaves a graphic narrative out of this skeleton ; his source is not traceable. It may not be wrong, however, to suppose that he has mainly drawn

147. Samvādo nadībhir Viśvāmitrasyottitīrṣoḥ (Sarvā. p. 16 1 line) the commentator is equally laconic.
148. ...Pañcadaśyādi dve vāce Sasarparyai (Sarvā. p. 16 1.11).
149. Sarvā. com. p. 107.
150. Ibid., p. 6.
151. Ibid., p. 48.
152. Ibid., p. 12 and p. 98.
153. Ibid.; p. 25.

from imagination rather than from any authentic source : The passage speaks for itself—

Vasiṣṭhasya sutaḥ Śaktiḥ puṣpādyartham yayau vanam /
Rājñas Sudāso dāsās tu Vāsiṣṭham dadṛśuś ca tam /
Viśvāmitraprayuktais tu rakṣobhir veṣṭitāś ca te /
Vanāgnau prākṣipamś cainam devabhakto'yam ityuta /
Āstiko'yam Vasiṣṭhasya putra ityeva ca krudhā /
Prakṣipyamāṇas so'paśyad Indra kratum iti dvṛcam /
Ardharcam uktavān ādyam tato'dahyata so'gninā /
Cirāyamāṇe putre tu putrasnehapariplutaḥ /
Mārgavikṣiptanayano Vasiṣṭho'bhyāgamad vanam /
Dagdham sutam atha śrutvā bhūtebhyaś śokakarśitaḥ /
Jñātvā tu dṛṣṭaśiṣṭam tu śikṣā ṇādi samāpayat /
Yadyardharcatrayam śiṣṭam adrakṣyan mama vai sutaḥ /
Ajīviṣyad ayam samyak sukhī ca śaradām śatam /
Ityuktvā dhṛtim ālambya prayayāvāśramam punaḥ /
Evam tu Śāṭyāyanakam vadanti brāhmaṇam kila /
Ādyārdharcam eva Śaktir dṛṣṭavān dagdha eva saḥ /
Dvṛcam sarvam Vasiṣṭhas tu dṛṣṭavān iti Tāṇḍakam /
Iti brāhmaṇavaimatyam vikalpāya pradarśitam /
Ataś ca // Indrakratum dvṛce Śaktir ādye'rdharce vikalpitaḥ /
Ṛṣir Vasiṣṭhas sūktasya devatā tvindra eva hi //[154]

In the above portraiture, one misses the divine grandeur or at least superhuman ability that usually attaches to a character like Vasiṣṭha. The young son being killed by the enemies lying in wait, when he was unguarded and specially when he was engaged in gathering flowers for worship, provides a background which is distinctly epic in style and conception. Vasiṣṭha's paternal care and anxiety are qualities too tame to be in conformity with the vigorous potentiality of a priest who was the guiding star of an advancing civilisation. It is said that the assassins were surrounded or supported by friends directed by Viśvāmitra. This entirely lacks authority or corroboration. Writing so late as the 12th century A.D. Saḍguruśiṣya had deeply imbibed the popular tradition (reflected in the epics and the Purāṇas) that Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were inveterate enemies of each other and that they never lost any opportunity to wreak vengeance against each other. Hence whatever Vasiṣṭha's misfortune, Viśvāmitra was the cause and *vice versa.*

The fact that, as time rolls on, tradition also varies is borne out by the divergence between the Śāṭyāyanaka and the Tāṇḍaka.[155] Of the two ṛks in question, the story alleges that Śakti had seen or composed the first hemestich only when

154. Sarvā. pp. 130-31. *vide* note 18 *supra.*

155. In fact ' Índra krátum na ā́ bhara ' (RV VII 32.26--) is uttered by Vasiṣṭha for the sake of progeny (prajātyai). It is part of janitra-sāma. Observe that according to Nītimañjarī of Dyā Dviveda, Śakti did not die ; he praised Indra and was saved. See infra.

he was consumed by the fire. The father came and saw the situation. Inspite of grief, he exerted himself to complete the dvṛca. If only we go into the content of the two verses, we will be disappointed to find not a trace of sorrow reflected in it. Granting that Śakti had begun to compose an excellent hymn to Indra—a very worthy start indeed—

Índra krátum na ā́ bhara
Pitā́ putrébhyo yáthā /[156]

" Bring us wisdom, O Indra, as a father (imparts the same) to the sons."—

It is indeed strange that the bereaved father's completion of the dvṛca does not reflect any grief and, therefore does not appear to have been composed with a heavy heart at all. This is how Vasiṣṭha saw—

Śíkṣā ṇo asmín Puruhūta yā́mani
Jīvā́ jyótir aśīmahi //
Mā́ no ájñātā vṛjánā durādhío
Máśivāso áva kramuḥ /
Tváyā vayám pravátaś śáśvatīr
Apó'ti śūra tarāmasi //[157]

" Teach us at this sacrifice, O Puruhūta, so that we, living beings, shall enjoy light. Let no unknown, wicked, malignant, malevolent enemy overpower us. Protected by you, may we cross over many waters." We have thus to conclude that the two mantras in question betray no clue to Vasiṣṭha's misfortune. We have only to respect the tradition.

The Sarvā. and the commentary do not throw fresh light on the Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ ; the latter reflects the information given by BD and reproduces one of the verses[158] (Śatadhā bhidyate mūrdhā etc.). The prasvāpinyupaniṣat has already been dealt with.[159]

The last hymn of the seventh maṇḍala is called Rākṣoghna *i.e.* " the demon-killer," which is described as Śāpābhiśāpaprāyam[160] full of oaths and imprecations." The text and the commentary are brief in their notice of this ; there is no reference to the loss of Vasiṣṭha's hundred sons, which the BD and the several Brāhmaṇa texts point out quite frequently.[161]

4. *Nītimañjarī*

The strange moralisations of the Nītimañjarī have already been familiar to us. We may note a few more examples.

156. RV VII 32.26ab
157. RV VII 32.26cd and 27.
158. BD IV 120.
159. *Supra* fn. 21-23.
160. Sarvā, p. 27.
161. BD VI 28 ; 31-34. RV VII 104. See *supra* and the sections on JUBr. PB etc.

A prolific parent comes to grief, indeed, like Viśvāmitra.

Rājaputro jaganmitro rājamānyo bahuprajaḥ
Sīdatyeva, Sudāso hi Viśvāmitro'harad dhanam //[162]

The author, Dyā Dviveda, comments—Yasmāt Sudāso rajño dhanam aharat (√hṛñ haraṇe) acūcurad ityarthaḥ. A strange interpretation, indeed, to say that Viśvāmitra robbed Sudās of his wealth ? And what was the grief that befell Viśvāmitra, after all ? He carried away the wealth that he had earned as priest ; the rivers Vīpāś and Śutudrī enabled him to cross over their confluence ; and he and Sudās were quite safe :[163]

Having thus cast a slur on the *bona fides* of Viśvāmitra, witness the next lesson that the author draws :

Somapānam vinā nṛṇām brāhmaṇatvam na vidyate /
Yadartham Gādhijo yaṣṭum dhanam hṛtvāvadannadīḥ //[164]

And what does he tell the rivers ? " Aham kuṭumbabharaṇād atiriktena dhanena somam sampādayiṣyāmīti !"—a bargain which did not become the priestly world of Ṛgvedic times.

One should attain one's object by all means, is the next lesson—

Nīcair nīcataro bhūtvā kāryam sādhyam vicakṣaṇaiḥ /
Gādhijaḥ kārutām prāpya prabhur apyatarannadīḥ //[165]

Here ' prabhurapi ' is somewhat dubious in its import. It may mean ' king ' or, in an adjectival sense, ' able.' Though quite able, Viśvāmitra assumed the rôle of a flatterer and successfully crossed the rivers.

Quite a problem is raised by the following dictum—

Guṇapraśamsayā kāryam mahatām mānavardhanam /
Kṣipto'gnāvaribhiś Śaktir nendrapraśamsāyā mṛtaḥ//[166]

' Great people should be further elevated in estimation by praising their virtues ; it is thus that though thrown to the fire by the enemies, Śakti was not dead because of his praise of Indra'.

Dyā explains : Yathā pūrvam Śaktir Vasiṣṭhaputra ṛṣir Agnau jvālyamāne śatrubhis Saudāsair dahanāya kṣiptas san Indra kratum ityantena pragāthārdharcena Indram praśaśamsa śiṣṭena Vasiṣṭhaś ca / Tathā Indrapraśamsayā Śaktir na mṛtaḥ / Tasmān mānavardhanam abhyudayāya bhavati /[166]

162. Nītimañjarī pp. 147-148. stanza 65. (Nītimañjarī: ed. S. J. Joshi, published at Hari Har Maṇḍal, Kalabhairava, Benares City, 1938).

163. *cf.* Nir. II 24 ; Sarvā III 33 ; BD IV 105-6. Ṛgvidhāna 177.

164. Nīti 66, p. 150 f.

165. Ibid 76, p. 152. f.

166. Ibid. 108, p. 225 and the com. thereon.

Dyā thinks that Śakti did not die whereas all the ancient works which refer to this incident declare that he did die. The Bṛhaddevatā[167] does not refer to Śakti's death but refers to the death of Vasiṣṭha's hundred sons caused by the Saudāsas. The Sarvā. states that Śakti was reduced to ashes,[168] having been thrown to the fire by the Saudāsas. Dya's rendering of the story is unauthenticated. The moral that the author propounds is too commonplace to require the remote authority of a Vedic event.

Strange things are conceived by this author Dviveda. For example,—

Kṛtāparādhaputrāṇām anyāyo na pitur hṛdi /
Pāśadyumnasya yajñasya hantṝms tuṣṭāva Vāruṇiḥ //[169]

Sons' wrongs do not matter to the parent is a dictum in Dyā's conception—' Delinquency on the part of sons will not affect the heart of the father. Vasiṣṭha praised his sons who put an end to Pāśadyumna's sacrifice'. The story is that Indra was present at Pāśadyumna's sacrifice and was about to partake of the Soma juice which was being pressed. Just then the sons of Vasiṣṭha, officiating at another sacrifice, pronounced such fulsome praise as made Indra leave the ready cup of Soma at Pāśadyumna's and come away to the one conducted by the Vāsiṣṭhas.[170] Granting the efficacy of the prayers of the Vāsiṣṭhas, one is compelled to question the soundness of Indra's action—Indra a god who should yield to persuasion and betray one devotee to prefer another.

Convenient shelter for unlawful actions is provided by the following advice—

Kutumbe pīḍyamāne tu dharmān nekṣeta dharmavit /
Vasiṣṭhas svāpayāmāsa yanmuṣe Vāruṇam janam //[171]

' The knower of Law should not observe the laws when the family is in distress. Vasiṣṭha sent all Varuṇa's people to sleep when he went there to steal ' : We shall amuse ourselves further by the author's comment—

Apyakāryaśatam kṛtvā bhartavyā ityuktatvāt / Vasiṣṭhavad akṛtyam api kṛtvā bhūṣaṇācchādanaiḥ kuṭumbam toṣayet /[172]

' Because it is said that (the family) shou'd be protected even by performing a hundred unwarranted deeds. One should please the family by means of ornaments and clothes, even committing a crime like Vasiṣṭha.' This recommendation is opposed to the original statement which permits a man to commit a crime when only the family is in distress. But Dyā means to suggest that even luxuries

167. BD VI 28, 31-34.

168. Sarvā. p. 25 on RV VII 32. In this hymn of Vasiṣṭha, the 10th stanza praises the gift of Paijavana Sudās, and the 26th is to be understood as having been connected with Vasiṣṭha's son Śakti's murder by Sudās's sons or followers. Something wrong with the tradition !

169. Nīti 104, p. 228.

170. RV VII 33.2.

171. Nīti 105, p. 230. Ref. RV VII 55, *cf.* fn. 21-28.

172. Śiṣya however concedes that the whole incident is based on story : " āsām prasvāpinītvam tu kathāsu parikalpyate " / v.l. kathām upari kalpate. Sarvā p. 133.

may be provided by stealing. He misses on the one hand that according to Bṛhaddevatā, Vasiṣṭha was experiencing a dream and on the other, according to Ṣaḍguruśiṣya,[173] he entered Varuṇa's house because he was afflicted with hunger. It is perhaps a third dimensional development to bring in the family also, as a plea and excuse for crime!

The wise man must try to free himself from false allegations, just as Vasiṣṭha cleared himself by swearing and cursing:

Mithyāpavādabhaṅgāya prayateta vicakṣaṇah /
Vasiṣṭhaś śapatham kṛtvā śāpam datvāmalo'bhavat //[174]

Vasiṣṭha happened to be once charged as 'yātudhāna' by a demon who posed himself as Vasiṣṭha. The situation became so embarrassing that the real sage had to swear his identity and then curse the evil demons. Sāyaṇa informs us as follows: atra kecid āhuḥ—[175]

Hatvā putraśatam pūrvam Vasiṣṭhasya mahātmanaḥ /
Vasiṣṭham rākṣaso'si tvam Vāsiṣṭham rūpam āsthitaḥ //
Aham Vasiṣṭha ityevam jighāmsū rākṣaso'bravīt /
Atrottarā ṛco[176] dṛṣṭā Vasiṣṭheneti naḥ śrutam //

Thus attacked by the Rākṣasa who killed his hundred sons and who disguised himself as the sage, Vasiṣṭha had to swear

Adyá murīya yádi yātudhāno ásmi
Yádi vā́yus tatápa pū́ruṣasya /
Ádhā sá vīraír daśábhir víyūyā
Yó mā mógham yā́tudhānétyā́ha //[177]

"This day let me die if I am 'Yātudhāna' or if I ever injured the life of a man; and he who falsely called me 'yātudhāna' shall be bereft of ten heroes (sons)."

The same incident affords another moral –
It is the nature of bad people to revile the good; wicked indeed are those who called Vasiṣṭha a 'yātudhāna':

Durjanānām svabhāvo'yam bhṛśam nindanti yat sataḥ /
Vasiṣṭhasya durātmāno yātudhāneti ye'bruvan //[178]

173. Ṛgvidhāna: Amīvaheti sūktena bhūtāni svapayen niśi /
Na hi prasvāpanam kiñcid īdṛśam vidyate kvacit //
And Manu: Brāhmaṇas sarvavarṇebhya ādadāno na duṣyati /
Jīvikātyayam āpanno yo'nnam atti yatas tataḥ /
ākāśam iva paṅkena na sa pātena lipyate // (X 104)
Hence Dyā concludes: Tasmād Vasiṣṭhaḥ Kuṭumbārtham taskaro babhūveti siddham! (Nīti, p. 236).

174. Nīti., 109, p. 240.

175. Sāyaṇa, on RV VII 104-12.

176. RV VII 104. 12-16.

177. RV VII 104.15.

178. Nīti. 110, p. 242.

Vasiṣṭha swears again—

> Yó mā́'yātum yā́tudhānétyā́ha
> Yó vā rakṣā́ś śúcir asmī́tyā́ha /
> Índras tám hantu mahatā́ vadhéna
> Víśvasya jantór adhamás padīṣṭa //[179]

He who calls me a fiendish demon (yātudhāna) when I am not one; and he who calls himself Vasiṣṭha the pure, that demon may Indra smite with his great weapon; and may he fall down beneath world's creation (*i.e.* to perdition).

To sum up: In these ancillary works which hold aloft the Vedic teaching and tradition, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, as usual, enjoy high reputation for their knowledge of the divine and for their superhuman achievements. Regarding their mutual relationship *viz.* enmity, there is direct expression in the Bṛhaddevatā, followed by the Sarvā., the commentators Durga and Sāyaṇa, and finally the Nītimañjarī. Only Yāska does not refer to it, though he had opportunity to do so while commenting on the word " lodha " which occurs in the verse regarded as a curse against the Vasiṣṭhas. It may therefore be concluded that this Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra feud acquired wide publicity and implicit belief by the time of the Bṛhaddevatā (400 B.C.)[180] so much so that society was prone even to expunge from the Vedic text the few verses known as ' Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ." For according to BD. " they were pronounced by Viśvāmitra as imprecations; the Vasiṣṭhas do not hear them; with full approval of the teachers. Great sin arises from reciting or listening to them. With them recited or heard, the head splits into a hundred bits; their children will die. Therefore one should not recite those verses."

> Parāś catasro yās tvatra Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyas smṛtāḥ /
> Viśvāmitreṇa tāḥ proktāḥ abhiśāpā iti smṛtāḥ /
> Vasiṣṭhās tā na śṛṇvanti tad ācāryakasammatam /
> Kīrtanācchravaṇād vāpi mahādoṣaś ca jāyate /
> Śatadhā bhidyate mūrdhā kīrtitena śrutena vā /
> Teṣām bālāḥ pramīyante tasmāt tās tu na kīrtayet //[181]

In fairness to Viśvāmitra, one wonders why, in the Vasiṣṭha-maṇḍala, no hymn or verse was styled Viśvāmitra-dveṣiṇyaḥ (Viśvāmitra-haters'), specially the Rākṣoghna-sūkta[182] which is full of oaths and imprecations (śapābhiśāpa-prāyam).[183] Was posterity, then, uncharitable to Viśvāmitra and partial to Vasiṣṭha ?[184]

179. RV VII 104.16.
180. BD ed. Macdonell (HOS. 5), p. xxii f.
181. BD IV 117-120.
182. RV VII 104.
183. Sarvā. p. 27.
184. See supra.

V

RĀMĀYAṆA

Popular tradition about the sage Viśvāmitra as well as the sage Vasiṣṭha finds systematic expression in the Rāmāyaṇa. The main events in the former's life are collected in the first book (Bālakāṇḍa 51-65). By the time of the Rāmāyaṇa, Viśvāmitra impresses us as a great Brahmarṣi of established reputation. He is one of the Seven Sages, who are Brahma's favourites and whose duty is to propagate righteousness in the world, to conduct sacrifices for public weal and also to cause, through proper agencies and timely intervention, the destruction of all evil. In this last aspect their task was to extirpate the demons who were a manace all over. Through so much of roughing of life in the mundane world and so much of austerity and penance to enjoy communion with the Absolute, these sages had become embodiments of peace and righteousness, always striving for the best fulfilment of God's purpose and man's emancipation. They were God's agents on earth as it were.

Thus came Viśvāmitra, once upon a time, to pay a visit to King Daśaratha of Ayodhyā (18).[185] Sage Vasiṣṭha was the latter's priest. Evidently the two sages had transcended all feelings of discard between themselves and knew and respected each other's merit.[186] So Viśvāmitra was received with great reverence and warmth. After the usual formalities, the holy sage proposed to take the young prince Rāma to guard his sacrifice against the attacks of Mārīca and Subāhu (19). With great dismay the king begged him to leave the Prince behind ; in fact, his tender affection worked itself to such an extent as to drive him to refuse to comply with the wishes of the holy sage (20). Viśvāmitra got angry ; but, the far-sighted Vasiṣṭha intervened. For, being omniscient, he realised the high-minded purpose behind Viśvāmitra's proposal. Daśaratha had no alternative but to yield. Both princes, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa were handed over to Viśvāmitra (22).

During the short period when Viśvāmitra had the princes under his care, it may be discerned that he gave them the best training which stood them in good stead later in their life's ordeal. He instructed them in the most efficacious vidyās, namely Balā and Atibalā,[187] and also imparted to them the knowledge of rare and powerful weapons.[188] Their strength and mettle were also put to the test in the fight with Tāṭakā[189] and then with Mārīca and Subāhu.[190] An acquaintance in

185. The figures in brackets indicate the relevant cantos in the Bālakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa (with com. Tilaka. N. S. Press, Bombay, 1902).

186. *cf.* Rām : I 18.47, 19.2, 19.14-15, 21.10-21 Daśaratha and Vasiṣṭha both refer to Viśvāmitra being a king before and then elevated to the rank of a Brahmarṣi by means of penance (Ibid. I 18.54-55, 21.13). Vasiṣṭha pays handsome compliment when he says of Viśvāmitra—Eṣa vigrahavān dharma eṣa vīryavatām varaḥ / Eṣa vidyādhiko loke tapasaś ca parāyaṇam // (21.10)...Tenāsya munimukhyasya dharmajñasya mahātmanaḥ / Na kiñcid astyaviditam bhūtam bhavyam ca Rāghava // Ibid. 19.

187. Rām. I. 23.

188. Ibid. I. 27-28.

189. Ibid. I. 30.

190. Ibid. I. 25-26.

their early age with the forests and the life therein was an asset. The stories related by Viśvāmitra are of absorbing interest ; they well speak of the sage's vast knowledge and experience. Above all the far-sightedness of the sage proved itself in the marriage at Janaka's capital between Rāma and Sītā. The Ahalyā incident[191] and that of lifting the Śiva-bow[192] inspired the future Saviour with confidence. Thus we see that Viśvāmitra very nobly discharged his obligations—if indeed they were obligations—to Daśaratha for having spared the services of Prince Rāma !

Viśvāmitra's past history is recorded as follows : Seated on the banks of the Śoṇā in the company of other sages, on their way to Janaka's sacrifice, Viśvāmitra, in reply to Rama's question regarding the country through which they were passing, described his own pedigree.[193] Kuśa of gerat penance was the son of Brahma, and he got four sons through Vaidarbhī—namely Kuśāmba, Kuśanābha, Asūrtarajasa and Vasu. Kuśāmba founded the famous ancient city of Kauśāmbī. Kuśanābha built the city called Mahodaya, Asūrtarajasa built Dharmāraṇya, and Vasu founded Girivraja (Magadha). Now Kuśanābha got one hundred daughters through Ghṛtācī, they being subsequently married to Brahmadatta of Kāmpilya. Kuśanābha then, performed a sacrifice for obtaining a son (putrakāmeṣṭi) and got, as reward a son named Gādhi. Viśvāmitra was the son of Gādhi, who had a daughter also, called Satyavatī. Satyavatī married sage Ṛcīka and ascended heaven bodily along with her husband. She then reappeared as a great river called Kauśikī. Viśvāmitra made his permanent abode on her banks ; but just now had come to Siddhāśrama to perform the ten-night sacrifice. True to this statement we see that after Rāma's marriage, Viśvāmitra repairs to the Northern Mountains (jagāmottaraparvatam), to his old residence.[194]

Brahmā
|
Kuśa married Vaidarbhī
|
Kuśāmba | Kuśanābha | Asūrtarajasa | Vasu

Kuśanābha
|
(through Ghṛtācī 100 daughters married Brahmadatta of Kāmpilya | Gādhi

Gādhi
|
Satyavātī (married Sage Ṛcīka) became R. Kauśikī. | Viśvāmitra

191. Ibid. I. 48-49.
192. Ibid. I. 66-67.
193. Ibid. I. 32-34.
194. Rām. I. 74.1 Tilaka adds "Kauśikītaṭāvicchinnam," not separated from the banks of the River Kauśikī.

This genealogy is later corroborated by Śatānanda's statement—

> Prajāpatisutas tvāsīt Kuśo nāma mahīpatiḥ /
> Kuśasya putro balavān Kuśanābhas sudhārmikaḥ /
> Kuśanābhasutas tvāsīd Gādhir ityeva viśrutaḥ /
> Gādheḥ putro mahātejā Viśvāmitro mahāmuniḥ /[195]

Śatānanda was the chief priest of King Janaka and, he, therefore, very warmly welcomed Viśvāmitra and the princes. Having learnt of his mother Ahalyā's redemption by the grace of Śrī Rāma and in a spirit of thankfulness to Viśvāmitra for having been instrumental therein, Śatānanda describes to the princes the great exploits of the sage.

For many thousand years did Viśvāmitra of great glory rule the Earth. In one of his victorious marches, he, with all his army and retinue, met the sage Vasiṣṭha in his hermitage. After the formal reception, Vasiṣṭha invited the royal guest to partake of his hospitality. Viśvāmitra and his entire following were lavishly entertained, each one according to his taste, and were extremely pleased. All this miracle was accomplished by the one divine cow which was devoted to Vasiṣṭha. Such a wonderful thing—a gem indeed fit to be in royal possession[196] Viśvāmitra begged to have in lieu of a hundred thousand cows, horses, elephants, chariots, gold and precious stones. Vasiṣṭha would not part with the sacred cow for all this world. But the king demanded and tried to take her forcibly. Her own divinity supported by the sage's power of penance made it impossible for the royal intruder to gain his object. Thwarted again and again, Viśvāmitra felt most humiliated and began to smart under defeat and disgrace when all his martial glory proved absolutely of no avail (I 54-55). It is said that during the battle, a hundred of Viśvāmitra's sons attacked Vasiṣṭha with a variety of weapons, but they were all in no time reduced to ashes by a mere " huṅkāra " from Vasiṣṭha (I 55.5 f.). Leaving the kingdom in charge of his sons,[197] Viśvāmitra did penance at the foot of the Himālayas to propitiate God Mahādeva, who ultimately granted him all the weapons available on earth at the command of gods and demons, Yakṣas and Gandharvas, and all. Armed fully in this manner, Viśvāmitra came back to wreak vengeance against his adversary. The hermitage was all destroyed; Vasiṣṭha accepted the challenge and with the help of his holy staff, set at naught the entire stock of his deadly weapons. Viśvāmitra was further humiliated with this defeat, so much so he burst out.

> Dhig balam kṣatriyabalam brahmatejobalam balam /
> Ekena brahmadaṇḍena sarvāstrāṇi hatāni me //[198]

195. Ibid. I 51. 18-19. *Cf.* Mbh. version the descent of Viśvāmitra which is somewhat different. Mbh. XII 49, XIII 4, see *supra* ch. III fn. 95.

196. ' Ratnam hi Bhagavannetad ratnahārī ca pārthivaḥ ' Ib.53.9

197. Viśvāmitra had innumerable sons, evidently. A hundred were killed by Vasiṣṭha. We shall see later that while he was doing penance he got other sons Haviṣpanda, Madhuṣpanda and others. The latter name reminds us of Madhucchandas, the Ṛgvedic seer. See fn. 92 of previous chapter.

198. Rām. I. 56.23.

Viśvāmitra then determined to perform severe penance such as would entitle him to Brahmahood. But he did not free himself from his hatred to Vasiṣṭha. Accompanied by the queen-consort, he went to the southern region and did severe penance. Here were born to him sons, namely Haviṣpanda, Madhuṣpanda, Dṛḍhanetra and Mahāratha. After a thousand years, God Brahma declared his recognition of Viśvāmitra as a Royal Saint (Rājarṣi). Disappointed, Viśvāmitra set himself upon further austerities.[199]

Meanwhile came Triśaṅku, King of Ayodhyā, seeking his help. It occurred to him once that he should sacrifice in such a manner as would elevate him bodily to heaven. Vasiṣṭha, of course, he approached for conducting such a sacrifice. Vasiṣṭha said such a thing is impossible. Then he approached Vasiṣṭha's sons who were doing penance in the south.[200] They also replied in the negative, whereupon Triśaṅku announced his intention to find other means of realising his object. The Vasiṣṭhas became angry and cursed him to become a caṇḍāla (an outcast). Overnight he was transformed and his counsellors and retinue ran away from him. Alone but determined, Triśaṅku came to Viśvāmitra and appealed for help in order to realise his object: "Fate, I think, is more powerful, man's strength is of no avail. Fate weighs over all and is the last resort. (I have thus been reduced to a miserable condition by Fate). Please therefore redeem me from ill Fate, by means of human endeavour."

> Daivam eva paraṃ manye pauruṣam tu nirarthakam /
> Daivenākramyate sarvam daivam hi paramā gatiḥ /
> ...Daivam puruṣakāreṇa nivartayitum arhasi //[201]

The sage was much moved to see the king's condition and it is not strange if his own frustration was also responsible to goad him on to espouse the cause of the distressed. And so Viśvāmitra resolved to fulfil the king's wish. But—

> Kṣatriyo yājako yasya caṇḍālasya viśeṣataḥ /
> Katham sadasi bhoktāro havis tasya surarṣayaḥ /
> Brāhmaṇā vā mahātmāno bhuktvā cāṇḍālabhojanam /
> Katham svargam gamiṣyanti Viśvāmitreṇa pālitāḥ /[202]

—Such doubts naturally would arise and the Vāsiṣṭhas did level the charge when the invitation for the sacrifice was extended to them. An outcast is to sacrifice, for whom a Kṣatriya is the priest, how can the gods and the ṛṣis partake of the oblations in the assembly? And the revered Brāhmans having enjoyed the hospitality given by an outcast, can they attain heaven under the protection of a Viśvāmitra? The insolence of this challenge was unbearable. Viśvāmitra cursed them all into a life of degradation for seven hundred births etc. By dint of his penance, the sacrifice was conducted according to rules; but the gods did not

199. Ibid. I. 57.9-10.
200. Rām. I. 57.
201. Ibid. I. 58.
202. Ibid. I. 59.13-15.

arrive to receive their share of the oblations. Filled with rage, Viśvāmitra declared the gift of all the merit of penance that he had so far earned and commanded Triśaṅku straightaway to fly to heaven. He did so, as all the assembly could see. But there in heaven Indra and the gods said that there was no place for him there ; and that, moreover he was condemned by the curse of his preceptor. Hence he should fall head downwards. Falling down he cried again to Viśvāmitra for protection. Then the sage grew terribly wrathful and, exerting all his supernatural powers, commanded him to stop there only in mid-air and began to create a separate heaven as if he were the Creator himself. Thus came into existence a separate group of Seven Sages and a Separate group of stars, etc. In a fit of anger, he began to proclaim:

" Anyam Indram Kariṣyāmi loko vā syād anindrakaḥ " " I will produce another Indra or the world shall go without him ! " In this grave situation, came forth all the gods, demons and sages to pacify Viśvāmitra. They struck a compromise that Triśaṅku and the new creation be recognised where they were as divinities outside the path of Vaiśvānara (Rām. I 60).

Viśvāmitra realised after the storm that his penance had been so obstructed in the South ; hence he moved on to the west to pursue his austerities near Puṣkara. Meanwhile an incident happened in Ayodhyā. The then king Ambarīṣa began to sacrifice. Indra stole the victim (paśu). Either it had to be recovered and sacrificed or a human substitute found. In this situation the king wandered about and found the sage Ṛcīka willing to part with a son of his, named Śunaśśepa for the price of a hundred thousand cows. We saw in the previous chapter how Śunaśśepa was taken by Ambarīṣa, how, on the way at Puṣkara, the young ascetic secured the help of Viśvāmitra, in the shape of two gāthās to be recited at proper time and how in the end Śunaśśepa was released by the gods etc.[203] Viśvāmitra observed penance at Puṣkara for a thousand years at the end of which God Brahmā appeared and pronounced him a Ṛṣi (I 63.2).

Seeing that the goal was yet far. Viśvāmitra resumed austerities. But this time an impediment was placed by the Apsaras Menakā, of exquisite beauty, who came to bathe in the Puṣkara. The sage gave in to cupid's call and invited the nymph to live with him in the hermitage. What more did Menakā want than a success in her trade ? Ten years elasped before the Ṛṣi realised his folly. He dismissed Menakā however with sweet words and wended his way to the Northern Mountain. There on the banks of the Kauśikī he did severe penance for thousands of years, which arrested the attention of all. Then, on the recommendation of all gods and sages, God Brahmā welcomed him as a Maharṣi. His bid for the title of a Brahmarṣi was not favoured because he had not yet obtained full control over his senses (I 63).

Thus, again, Viśvāmitra had to return to penance, with renewed vigour and severity. With uplifted arms, supportless and subsisting on mere air, he entered

203. *Vide* ch. III on Śunaśśepa. fn. 76. *cf.* Rām. I 61 and 62.

upon another thousand-year austerity. In summer he observed the vow in the midst of five fires (four on four sides and one, the Sun-god, above) ; in the monsoons he stood in the open and in winter he remained in water day and night. Great concern was expressed in heaven, seeing such austerity on the part of Viśvāmitra. Indra decided to put him to the test and, this time, the onerous duty fell to the lot of the Apsaras Rambhā. Though she knew the risk, she had to obey Indra and succeeded in diverting the ascetic's attention by means of her charming beauty and sweet melody. But the sage soon realised that she was another trap set by Indra, again, and in rage, cursed her to ten thousand years of existence as a mountain (64). Giving vent to his anger in this manner, he found that he had suffered frustration once more.

Finally, we see Viśvāmitra embark upon the severest type of mortification and penance. He left the Northern regions and went to the East. For a thousand years the sage was engaged in very severe austerities and pledged to silence. He was reduced to a mere stick at the end. Inspite of obstructions he never gave in for anger. At the end of the thousand years the vow of silence and starvation ended, and the sage would have a morsel of food on that day. Just when he was to partake of it, Indra in the guise of a divija came and aksed for it. Without a moment's hesitation he gave all the food to the Brāhman. When nothing remained he did not mind nor said a word, but straightaway entered the last phase of his penance which was neither to eat nor even to breathe. Years lapsed and the mortification was such as the sage's head began to emit fumes. It was realised on all hands that he had stood the test. Brahmā came with all the gods and felicitated him as a BRAHMARṢI. Viśvāmitra paid homage to the God in all humility, but demanded that the Vedas, the sacred OM and Vaṣaṭ should favour him and that Vasiṣṭha should openly acknowledge his elevation. That of course Vasiṣṭha did with great pleasure. For when persons perceive Divine Light, there can be no bone of contention at all among them (65).

Those present listened to Viśvāmitra's past history with wrapt attention and amazement. Next day the great Bow of Śiva was shown to Rāma, who with permission, lifted it up with ease. The bow incidentally gave way. Rāma's performance was wonderful. As Janaka had avowed, arrangements were immediately set on foot to celebrate the marriage of Sītā with Rāma. Fleet-footed messengers were sent to Ayodhyā with invitations to king Daśaratha and all his train to come to Mithilā. Needless to say that it was a grand celebration. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra having met again moved only as friends. With the former's approval, Viśvāmitra moved for the marriage of all the four sons of Daśaratha at the same time with the daughters of Janaka and his brother Kuśadhvaja. After the great event, Viśvāmitra bidding farewell to the two kings returned to the Northern Mountains (66.73).

Before evaluating the Viśvāmitra-stories that appear in the Rāmāyaṇa, one point requires to be carefully remembered. From the point of view of critical scholarship, it is held that the first and the last books (*i.e.* Bāla and Uttara Kāṇḍas)

are not genuine to the original poem. Even so the narrative in question is a later interpolation. Granting this, nevertheless, these stories have their own value because they do stand anterior to many portions of the Mahābhārata, and most of the Purāṇas. For, according to Winternitz,[204] 'it is probable that the Rāmāyaṇa had its present extent and contents as early as towards the close of the second century A.D.'' Reserving a comparative estimate of these chapters to a subsequent section, it must be said in appreciation that in no other work do we get a connected account of the events of Viśvāmitra's life. In itself the account provides a consistent biography of the sage, sufficient to portary in correct outline a great personality of Ancient Bhārata.

Vasiṣṭha is the well-known priest of the Ikṣvāku race. He is naturally held in high veneration. One finds that in the Rāmāyaṇa, there is not much of an outstanding nature in the life of the sage. His sincere devotion to the best interests of the royal house of Ayodhyā is evident. Sage Vāmadeva seems to be in close association with him. Other sages like Jābāli, Kāśyapa and even Visvāmitra appear on occasions only. By the time of the epic, the personalities of the sages are made up. They are almost a type ; they have had a great past with established holiness and reputation. The Creative period or the period of growth in the life and profession of the sages and the priests appears to have ended. They enjoy universal recognition as promoters of social well-being and divine grace. Their ultimate goal was Emancipation through penance, their earthly duty was to spread good-will and help the destruction of evil which harassed the world in the form of fiends and demons.

VI

MAHĀBHĀRATA

The theory of later interpolations notwithstanding, it must be conceded that the main theme of the Rāmāyaṇa is allowed to run smoothly without being interrupted by endless stories, discourses and disputations, as is the case with the other epic, the Mahābhārata. Between the two epics, the growth of which was surely simultaneous for a few centuries at least, all efforts at elaboration seem to have concentrated on the Mahābhārata. Ultimately it became a *magnum opus* whose grandeur in volume and variety has never been, nor is ever likely to be, surpassed. All that was popular in tradition as regards learning, legend, philosophy, statecraft, and the temporal and spiritual life of the land, came to be incorporated in it. We shall therefore look for exhaustive information in this work about Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha, their mutual relationship as well as their individual greatness.

The Age of the Mahābhārata envisages a state of fulfilment that crowned the austerities of the Ṛṣis. Sages and ascetics pursuing a life of renunciation and seclusion in the forest abodes is still a familiar feature of the Mahābhārata life.

204. *Cf.* Winternitz, HIL Vol. I (Calcutta) p. 516.

But Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra and others of their category belonged to the hoary past as it were. By virtue of their penance, they had achieved a kind of omniscience, they were immortal. On all occasions of great moment they would be present with Indra, Brahmā and other gods. Thus we find numerous references in the Mbh. to the fact that Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were among the Seven Sages (Saptarṣis) who generally reside in the North.[205] The following were present, for instance, at the time of Arjuna's birth : Sapta caiva maharṣayaḥ—

Bharadvājaḥ Kaśyapo Gautamaś ca Viśvāmitro Jamadagnir Vasiṣṭhaḥ /
Yaś codito Bhāskare'bhūt praṇaṣṭe So'pyatrātrir bhagavān ājagāma //
(I 123.51)

They were again among those who surrounded Bhīṣma,[206] when he was lying on the bed of arrows. Vasiṣṭha's name is specially associated with Bhīṣma, who obtained from him the knowledge of the Vedas and their branches (vedāṅgas)[207] and who is described as (Vasiṣṭha-śikṣita) Vasiṣṭha's pupil.[208] This looks somewhat strange when we are told that Bhīṣma was one of the Vasus, named Dyaus, born on earth on account of Vasiṣṭha's curse, the offence being that in one of their perambulations, Dyaus caused Vasiṣṭha's sacred cow (homadhenu) to be taken away from the sage's hermitage.[209] Vasiṣṭha cursed the Vasus saying that they

205. Mahābhārata references in this section are to be found in the Citraśālā Edition, Poona, with Nīlakaṇṭha's commentary called Bhārata bhāvadīpa. Vas. and Viś. among the seven sages of the North will be found in Mbh. I 123.51, 233.29, III 163.15, 224.26, XII 122.31, 208.32-33, 335.29, XIII 93.88,96 ; 126.42-49, 150.38-39, 165.44, XIV 27.18 etc., etc.

206. Mbh. XII 47.7, XIII 26.4, 5.

207. Ibid. I 100.35-39.
Vedān adhijage sāṅgān Vasiṣṭhād eṣa vīryavān /
Kṛtāstraḥ parameṣvāso devarājasamo yudhi //

208. Ibid. XII 37.11.
Bhārgavāc Cyavanāc cāpi Vedān aṅgopabṛmhitān /
Pratipede mahābāhur Vasiṣṭhāc caritavrataḥ //

It is interesting to note that Bhīsma was reputed to have seen in person Indra and other gods (sākṣād dadarśa yo devān sarvān Indrapurogamān) ; he saw the devarṣis many times (asakṛt), obtained knowledge of things from the very propounders of śāstras : thus Uśanas taught him Rājadharma, as also Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, Veda and Vedāṅgas he learnt from Vasiṣṭha and Cyavana, adhyātma from (Sanat) Kumāra, yatidharma from Mārkaṇḍeya, weapons from Rāma (Jāmadagnya) and Śakra. He would meet Death by his own will (Ibid. XII 37.8-16).

In another context Kṛṣṇa pays him great compliment. He urges Yudhiṣṭhira to visit Bhīṣma on his bed of arrows and learn from him higher knowledge :
Tasminnastamite Bhīṣme Kauravāṇām dhurandhare /
Jñānānyastam gamiṣyanti tasmāt tvām codayāmyaham //
Cāturvidyam cāturhotram cāturāśramyam eva ca /
Rājadharmāmś ca nikhilān pṛcchainam pṛthivīpate // (XII 46.22-23).

209. Mbh. I 98.19.
Ime'ṣṭau Vasavo devā mahābhāgā mahaujasaḥ /
Vasiṣṭhaśāpadoṣeṇa mānuṣatvam upāgatāḥ //

The details of the incident are given in the next canto (I 99). Āpava Vasiṣṭha, having cursed them to a life on earth, relents indeed when the Vasus pleaded guilty. So he revised the curse :
" Anusamvatsarāt sarve śāpamokṣam avāpsyatha /
Ayam tu yatkṛte yūyam mayā śaptāḥ sa vatsyati /
Dyaus tadā mānuṣe loke dīrghakālam svakarmaṇā //
(Ibid. I 99.38-39).

should be born on earth, but added that only Dyaus should dwell on for a long time. Story goes on to say that the Vasus prevailed upon the divine river Gaṅgā, that she, having borne them to king Śantanu, should throw them into the water, except the eighth. This eighth child was Devavrata otherwise known as Bhīṣma.[210]

Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are mentioned among the great sages who expect Yudhiṣṭhira to visit them during his pilgrimage.[211] With the sage Lomaśa for his guide, the exile king visited their āśramas, which may be regarded as their permanent abodes for all time.[212] Situated as these were on river banks, they were rendered holy by the austerities of the saints and were reputed as holy places of pilgrimage.[213] Ācārya Droṇa invoked the blessings of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra on Duryodhana for a victory over Arjuna.[214] Later as the Great Battle progressed, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were among the Seven Sages who came to carry away the departed Droṇa to Heaven.[215] The Bisastainyopaniṣat (the mystery of the theft of the lotus stalk) records a peculiar experience for the Seven Sages who went round on a tour. They were once confronted by a Yātudhānī who intending to kill them, put them to a test when they were all hungry and thirsty and wanted to refresh themselves with the lotus stalks and water in a lake over which she kept watch. Each one of the party was to announce his or her name, (Arundhatī also accompanied them), which was done with a certain sense of humour. Incident-

210. Ibid I 96. 15-19.

Na tacchakyam nivartayitum yaduktam brahmavādinā /
Tvam asmān mānuṣī bhūtvā sṛja putrān vasūn bhuvi /
Na mānuṣīṇām jaṭharam praviśema vayam śubhe /

* *

Pratīpasya suto rājā Śāntanur lokaviśrutaḥ /
Bhavitā mānuṣe loke sa naḥ kartā bhaviṣyati /

* *

Jātān Kumārān svān apsu prakṣeptum vai tvam arhasi /
yathā na cirakālam no niṣkṛtih syāt trilokage /

Ibid. I 99.45-7 (Later) Gaṅgā to Śāntanu :

Ayam śāpād ṛṣes tasya eka eva nṛpottama /
Dyau rājan mānuṣe loke ciram vatsyati Bhārata /
Sa tu Devavrato nāma Gāṅgeya iti cābhavat /
Dyunāmā Śāntanoḥ putraś Śāntanor adhiko guṇaiḥ //

211. Ib. II 85.119-120. Ete ṛṣivarās sarve tvatpratīkṣās tapodhanāḥ.

212. Ib. III 110.20,22. The āśramas or hermitages are mentioned in several contexts. *cf.* I 215.2 (Vasiṣṭhasya ca parvatam), III 82.56, 102.3 etc.

213. Ib. III 82.56 (a Vas. tīrtha on Mt. Arbuda), 83.139 (Viś. tīrtha, bathing where, one becomes a Brāhman), 179 (Badarapācana of Vas.), 84.48 (Vas.), 131 (Kauśikī), 87.13 (Utpalāvana Viś. became Brahman), 130.17 (Ujjānaka, Vas. with Arundhatī).

214. Mbh. 94.39 et. seq. Sañjaya uvāca—(to Dhṛtarāṣṭra)

Evam uktvā tvaran Droṇaḥ spṛṣṭvāmbho varma bhāsvaram /
Ābabandhādbhutatamam japan mantram yathāvidhi /
Raṇe tasmin sumahati vijayasya sutasya te /
Visismāpayiṣur lokān vidyayā bramhavittamaḥ /

* *

Asito Devalaś caiva Viśvāmitras tathāṅgirāḥ /
Vasiṣṭhaḥ Kaśyapaś caiva svasti kurvantu te nṛpa //

215. Ibid. VII 190.33.

ally, Viśvāmitra introduces himself as a friend of the Viśvedevas and of the Kine ; Vasiṣṭha is most excellent and he lives as a great householder.[216] The Yātudhānī was, of course, killed by a wayfarer called Śunassakha[217] (accompanied by a dog) who joined them on the way and was no other than Indra in disguise ! The sages figure again in a similar funny incident which may be called " Puṣkarastainya " (stealing of the lotus), but designated ' Śapathavidhi ' in the books. Here again comes Indra to solve the mystery. The sages of earth and heaven swore by many things sacred to say that they did not commit the theft of the puṣkara. Indra was the thief, of course, and apologised in the end that he devised this incident in order to hear from them the acts and principles of Dharma, by which they swore, but which, as the world could realise, constituted the basis of all righteousness.[218]

Viśvāmitra is mentioned among departed kings, who lived a glorious life on earth, performed sacrifices, and ascended heaven, as enumerated by Sañjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, so that he might take consolation in his sad bereavement.[219] Further, Viśvāmitra as a king who became a Brahmarṣi by his austere penance is often times remembered in the Mahābhārata.[220] He is also credited with doing a good

216. Ibid. XIII 93—

Viśvedevāś ca me mitram mitram asmi gavām tathā /
Viśvāmitram iti khyātam yātudhāni nibodha mām //
Vasiṣṭho'smi variṣṭho'smi vase vāsagṛheṣvapi /
Vasiṣṭhatvāc ca vāsāc ca Vasiṣṭha iti viddhi mām //

Cf. Nīlakaṇṭhīya : vāsagṛheṣu vāsayogyeṣu gṛhasthāśrameṣu / The touring party consisted of the seven sages with the revered Arundhatī, a maid servant named Gaṇḍā and her husband Paśusakha.

217. Ibid XIII 93.106—Śunassakha declares himself thus before the Yātudhānī—

Ebhir uktam yathā nāma nāham vaktum ihotsahe /
Śunassakhasakhāyam mām Yātudhānyavadhāraya //

Com. śvā dharmaḥ / tatsakhāyo munayaḥ, teṣām sakhā śunassakhasakhaḥ (Indraḥ). Yama, the God of Dharma, appearing as a dog is a familiar feature. The dog that followed Yudhiṣṭhira in his final journey was Dharma himself. In the present context it happens that the wandering mendicant (Śunassakha) was accompanied by a dog. In reality he was Indra in disguise, and Indra is named Śunāsīra which has some Vedic basis. It is interesting to study the semantic history of the words Śunam and śvan. An attempt is made in the foregoing chapter on Śunaśśepa.

218. Mbh. XIII 94. Here also was a party on pilgrimage, but consisted of royal saints as well as the Brāhman saints. Indra said in the end—Na mayā bhagavan lobhāddhṛtam puṣkaram adya vai / Dharamāms tu śrotukāmena hṛtam na kroddhum arhasi //

219. Mbh. I 1.227 (Viśvāmitram amitraghnam Ambarīṣam mahābalam). Again (XIV 91.34) Śrūyante hi purā vṛttā Viśvāmitrādayo nṛpāḥ / Viśvāmitro'sitas caiva Janakaś ca mahīpatiḥ /

220. I. 71.29 (Kṣatrajātaś ca yaḥ pūrvam abhavad brāhmaṇo balāt). This appears to be an anomaly, however. The context is Indra deputing Menakā to obstruct Viśvāmitra's penance ; Menakā pleads fear of a sage of such attainments. Viśvāmitra became a Brahmarṣi only after transcending earthly passions. Here he succumbs to Menakā's blandishments and begets Śakuntalā, the immortal heroine of Kālidāsa's masterpiece. Compare, further, (*a*) Mbh. I 137.14 (Viśvāmitra is an example of Brāhmanas born of Kṣatriyas :

Kṣatriyebhyaś ca ye jātā Brāhamṇās te ca te śrutāḥ /
Viśvāmitraprabhṛtayaḥ prāptā brahmatvam avyayam //

(*b*) I 175,47-48. By means of penance Viśvāmitra obtained success, having paralysed the worlds with his brilliance ; he attained Brāhmanhood, what is more, partook of the soma in Indra's company (Apibacca tatas somam Indreṇa saha Kauśikaḥ). (*c*) III 87.13, 15-17. It was on the banks of the Kauśikī that Viśvāmitra, rich in penance, became a Brahman. He then celebrated many sacrifices on the Ganges, in the pāñcālas at Utpalāvana, and even at Kānyakubja

turn to the wives of six of the Seven Sages, the exception being Arundhatī. It happened that the God of Fire fell in love with the wives of the divine sages, while coming out of a sacrificial rite which the gods were performing in order to find a suitable general for the divine army.[221] Finding it delicate to make advances to those innocent souls, he tried to derive pleasure by seeing and touching them in his capacity of the Gārhapatya Fire.[222] Not satisfied with this, however, he repaired to a forest to do away with himself. But Svāhā, daughter of Dakṣa, who had

where he quaffed soma with Indra and declared that he a kṣatriya had risen high to become a Brāhmaṇa (Kānyakubje'pibat somam Indreṇa saha Kauśikaḥ / tataḥ Kṣatrād apākrāmat Brāhmaṇo'smīti cābravīt //). (*d*) V 106.18. It is said that Viśvāmitra in the final stages of his austerities stood the test of Dharma who appeared in the guise of Vasiṣṭha; from the state of Kṣatriya, Viśvāmitra attained the state of a Brāhmaṇa (Kṣatrabhāvād apagato brāhmaṇatvam upāgataḥ / Dharmasya vacanāt prīto Viśvāmitras tathā'bhavat //). (*e*) IX 39.25,37. Balarāma during his tour came to the hermitage of Ruṣaṅgu on the banks of Sarasvatī where Ārṣṭiṣeṇa did penance and where also Viśvāmitra attained brāhmanhood. Sindhudvīpa and Devāpi also became Brāhmaṇas at this holy place. (*f*) XIII 3.2 ; 4.48. In answer to a question by Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīṣma explains the lineage of Viśvāmitra and how he became a Brahman. He means to suggest that apart from his achievements, there was Brahman in his blood, he having been born by the grace of the sage Ṛcīka (XIII 4). Further, Viśvāmitra, Bhīṣma informs, founded a race of Brahmavādins ; 62 sons of them are named—

Viśvāmitram cājanayad Gādhibhāryā Yaśasvinī /
Ṛṣeḥ prasādād rājendra brahmarṣer brahmavādinam /
Tato brāhmaṇatām yāto Viśvāmitro mahātapāḥ //

(*g*) XIII 18.16 f. Viśvāmitra is said to have declared to the son of Pāṇḍu that he became a Brāhmaṇa by the grace of Śiva. Other sages in turn relate how they were favoured by this God, the purpose of all being to bring home to Yudhiṣṭhira the efficacy of worshipping Śiva. (*h*) XIII 30.2. (*i*) XIII 55.31, 56.12 ff. Once in Gods' assembly, Brahmā declared that there will be Brahma-Kṣatra admixture in the Kuśika race. Sage Cyavana heard this, determined to destroy the whole race before the thing could happen, and, with the privilege of his being a sage, put king Kuśika to untold hardship. He wanted to find some pretext by which he could curse him to extinction. But Kuśika's steadfastness and devotion were remarkable. So Cyavana, believing in the inevitable, came to favour him. The third in his line would become a Brāhmaṇa (Tṛtīyam puruṣam tubhyam brāhmaṇatvam gamiṣyati st. 31). Further questioned by Kuśika, Cyavana explained that his grand-daughter would bear a Brāhmaṇa with Kṣatriya instincts and that his son Gādhi would be favoured with Viśvāmitra for his son, a Kṣatriya with Brāhmaṇa achievements.

Gādher duhitaram prāpya pautrīm tava mahātapāḥ /
Brāhmaṇam Kṣatradharmāṇam putram utpādayiṣyati /
Kṣatriyam viprakarmāṇam Bṛhaspatim ivaujasā /
Viśvāmitram tava kule Gādheḥ putram sudhārmikam /
Tapasā mahatā yuktam pradāsyti mahādyute // (st. 11-13).

(*j*) XIII 106.68. Commending the upavāsavidhi (vow of fasting) Bhīṣma cites the instance of Viśvāmitra who attained Brāhmanhood by sustaining himself on a single meal (a day ?) for a thousand celestial years :

Divyavarṣasahasrāṇi Viśvāmitreṇa dhīmatā /
Kṣāntam ekena bhaktena tena vipratvam āgataḥ //

221. Represented as Brahma's daughter, Devasenā, the other daughter being Daityasenā who was carried away by the demon Keśin. (III 224.1).

222. It is well-known that in the Gṛhya rites, the householder is always accompanied by the wife (samanvārabdhā).

Bhūyas sañcintayāmāsa na nyāyyam kṣubhito hyaham /
Sādhvyaḥ patnyo dvijendrāṇām akāmāḥ kāmayāmyaham /
Naitāś śakyā mayā draṣṭum spraṣṭum vāpyanimittataḥ /
Gārhapatyam samāviśya tasmāt paśyāmyabhīkṣṇaśaḥ /
Samspṛśanniva sarvās tāḥ śikhābhiḥ kāñcanaprabhāḥ /
Paśyamānaś ca mumude gārhapatyam samāśritaḥ //
Mbh. III 224.34-36.

in vain loved him, now resolved upon assuming the guise of the wives of the seven ṛṣis. Svāhā first gratified her desire in the guise of Śivā the wife of Aṅgiras, and then, lest somebody should unduly suspect the Brāhmaṇa ladies, she went out of the forest as a bird (suparṇī), and on the Śveta mountain that was covered with lumps of reeds and guarded by serpents, monsters and fiends, she threw the semen which she held in her hand into a golden basin. Then assuming successively the form of five of the others, she did the same on the first lunar day (pratipat). Only the form of Arundhatī she was unable to assume because of her ascetic merit and devotion to her husband. The semen thrown on the Śveta mountain produced a child, whom the Ṛṣis called Skanda, with six heads.... Terrific prodigies were seen everywhere. Everybody accused the wives of the six sages, others accused the female eagle as being the cause thereof, but nobody suspected Svāhā. The Ṛṣis divorced their wives with the exception of Arundhatī, though Svāhā claimed the child as hers. Viśvāmitra, having concluded the sacrifice of the seven ṛṣis, had secretly followed the god of fire and knew everything as it had happened. He sought the protection of Skanda and performed for him the thirteen auspicious rites of childhood. Though Viśvāmitra informed the seven ṛṣis of the innocence of their wives yet they abandoned them unconditionally.[223]

Viśvāmitra had a very devoted pupil in the person of Gālava.[224] This pupil happened to serve him loyally even in his difficult circumstances. Finally Viśvāmitra blessed him to go, but Gālava requested the teacher to state the fee (gurudakṣiṇā). The teacher was content but the earnest pupil pressed his request. With a little displeasure as it were, Viśvāmitra asked Gālava to present him with 800 white horses with one ear black.[225] This was an impossibility. When he was feeling desperate, Suparṇa came to his assistance. He offered to take him on his back anywhere he wished, so that he might collect the rare type of animal from several kings and then meet the wishes of his teacher. After much wandering, they came to king Yayāti of Pratiṣṭhāna and Suparṇa made the request on behalf of Gālava. His recommendation was weighty, but Yayāti had no horses of that description. He offered, instead, his beautiful daughter Mādhāvī, setting whom as price, they could easily get the 800 horses from kings who have them. Seeing her beauty kings would even part with their kingdoms.[226] At this stage when some way to success was found Suparṇa took leave of Gālava. With the maiden Mādhavī then, Gālava set out and went to Haryaśva king of Ayodhyā, who was childless.

223. Mbh. III Chs. 224 to 226, relevant portions. Viśvāmitra himself being one of the seven sages, he at least must have granted pardon for his wife! *cf.* Rām. I 36-37 regarding the birth of Skanda. The version is brief, there is no reference to the sages' wives being involved.

224 Mbh. V Chs. 106 to 119—Gālavacarita.

225. Ekataḥ śyāmakarṇānāṁ hyānām candravarcasām /
Aṣṭau śatāni me dehi gaccha Gālava mā ciram // Mbh. V. 106.27.

226. Iyam surasutaprakhyā sarvadharmopacāyinī /
Sadā devamanuṣyāṇām asurāṇām ca Gālava /
Kāṅkṣitā rūpato bālā sutā me pratigṛhyatām /
Asyāś śulkam pradāsyanti nṛpā rājyam api dhruvam /
kim punaś śyāmakarṇānām hayānām dve catuśśate //
(V. 115.11-13).

There he offered him the maiden for the price of 800 white horses with one ear black. The king had only two hundred and therefore proposed that he would beget only one son by her. Mādhavī revealed to Gālava that she had a boon from a sage that she would revert to virginhood after every childbrith, and that he might collect the required number from four kings if he liked. Readily the terms were accepted. Haryaśva got a son Vasuprada by name. From Haryaśva, they went to Divodāsa of Kāśī and then to Auśīnara[227] of Bhojanagara. But a fourth king they could not find. Suparṇa came again and advised that he should take the collection hitherto made to Viśvāmitra and offer Mādhavī herself in lieu of the balance due, if that would please him. It was timely advice ; Viśvāmitra was pleased and in fact asked why he did not offer her first to him ; he could have got four sons to propagate his race![228] It is said that Viśvāmitra was pleased to beget a son (Aṣṭaka) on Mādhavī and discharge the pupil of his obligations. The virgin was then restored to her father Yayāti, and Gālava went to penance.

On account of Viśvāmitra, it is reported that Indra lost his testicles which afterwards were substituted with those of a ram.[229]

In the thirty-sixth year after the Battle, a few sages, Viśvāmitra, Kaṇva and Nārada happened to visit Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa's city. Seeing this, some young men of the Vṛṣṇi clan, Sāraṇa and others, tried to insult them. They dressed one among themselves (Sāmba) as a woman and asked the sages what kind of child she would bear forth. Discovering their trick, the sages cursed them to destruction : that Sāmba would bring forth an iron club which will cause the destruction of the Vṛṣṇyandhakas except Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa ; Dvāraka will be overwhelmed by the sea ; Death stalks the city, which has become demoralised, the people, giving way to drink at a festival, slay one another.[230]

The Pativratopākhyāna records[231] an amusing story of how a woman taught the Brāhman Kauśika that a wife's chief duty is to her husband, even before Brāhmaṇas. Once a Brāhman, Kauśika by name, learned in the Vedas and the

227. Auśīnara's son was the famous king Śibi (118.20) Divodāsa's son was Pratardana.

228. ś Kim iyam pūrvam eveha na dattā mama Gālava /
Putrā mamaiva catvāro bhaveyuḥ kulabhāvanāḥ /
Partigṛhṇāmi te kanyām ekaputraphalāya vai /
Aśvāś cāśramam āsādya carantu mama sarvaśaḥ //
(119.16-17).

229. Mbh. XII 342.23.
Ahalyādharṣaṇanimittam hi Gautamāddhariśmaśrutām Indraḥ prāptaḥ Kauśikanimittam cendro muṣkaviyogam meṣavṛṣaṇatvam cāvāpa // How Kauśika comes in this Indra-Ahalyā incident is not clear. Sorensen thinks that Indra was reduced to that state by the curse of Viśvāmitra (Kauśikanimittam). Index Vol. II, p. 729. According to the Rāmāyaṇa, it was Gautama's curse that made him ' viphala ' (petatur Vṛṣaṇau bhūmau sahasrākṣasya tatkṣaṇāt). Then the gods under the leadership of Agni " utpāṭya meṣavṛṣaṇau sahasrākṣe nyaveśayan." (Rām. I cantos 48 and 49).

230. Ibid. XVI chs. 1 to 3.

231. Ibid. III chs. 205 to 216. It is clear that the Brāhman Kauśika who figures in this upākhyāna is not the famous Ṛṣi Viśvāmitra though both are Kauśikas. The former is evidently one belonging to the Brāhman families which were founded by Viśvāmitra and belongs to a period far removed from the founder-sage and nearer the age of the Mahābhārata composition. The story may even be a later interpolation.

Upaniṣads, was reciting them as he was seated under a tree. A crane from above dropped dirt on him. Wrathful, he looked at the bird which at once fell down dead. Sad, however, he went his way and came to the village for alms. There in a house, the lady was busy washing the utensils and therefore, asked the Brāhman to stay while she would come up and offer alms. Meanwhile the husband came ; she, at once, addressed herself to attend upon him, offering the arghya, pādya etc. This took some time, and when the lady came to give alms to the Brāhman, he severely objected to her inordinate delay in honouring the Brāhman, who is an object of veneration even for Indra. And Brāhmans are like fire ; they would reduce to ashes, the entire earth ! With these words he looked at her fiercely. But the pativaratā cooly replied—

Nāham balākā viprarṣe tyaja krodham tapodhana /
Anayā kruddhayā dṛṣṭyā kruddhaḥ kim mām kariṣyasi /
Nāvajānāmyaham viprān devais tulyān manasvinaḥ /
Aparādham imam vipra kṣantum arhasi me'nagha /

* * *

Patiśuśrūṣayā dharmo yas sa me rocate dvija /
Daivateṣvapi sarveṣu bhartā me daivatam param //[232]

" I am not the crane, O sage; give up your anger. What indeed would you do for me with your angry looks? Brāhmans I will not disregard, for they are high-minded and equal to the gods. Do forgive this mistake, O sinless one. ...What dharma there is in attending upon the husband I like very much. Of all the gods, the husband alone is pre-eminent for me." She further adivsed Kauśika to go to Dharmavyādha (the Righteous Hunter) in Mithilā and learn from him all the dharmas. The Brāhman was much ashamed at this discomfiture, but took the lady's advice in good spirit and went to dharmavyādha. The wisdom that he preached was as follows :

(*a*) that it is possible to live a virtuous life even though one's profession is to sell meat,

(*b*) that sincere repentance cleanses from sin,

(*c*) the marks of virtuous conduct,

(*d*) that there is justification for the killing of animals and eating their flesh,

(*e*) concerning the law of Karma, the eternity of the soul, re-incarnation and emancipation.

(*f*) of Brahma-vidyā—the elements, guṇas, prāṇas, etc. and that the relation of the soul to the senses is like that of a charioteer to his horses,

(*g*) of the great merit of dutifulness to parents, and that character is more important than caste.[233]

232. Mbh. III 206.23-24, 30.

233. Mbh. III Chs. 205-216. See G. P. Rice's Index to the Mahābhārata (OUP 1934.)

Describing the exploits of Paraśurāma to Yudhiṣṭhira, Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa) traces his lineage[234] to which Viśvāmitra also belongs. Jahnu's son was Aja (Ajamīḍha ?) and his son was Balākāśva. Kuśika was Balākāśva's son. Kuśika performed austerities with the object of gaining a son like Indra. The latter preferred to take upon himself the honour of becoming Kuśika's son. Thus was the famous Gādhi born. Gādhi begot a daughter called Satyavatī who was married to Ṛṣi Ṛcīka. This sage prepared the holy caru in order to obtain progeny. As Satyavatī's mother also desired the favour of a son, the sage prepared the sacred food in two parts, prescribing one to his wife and the other to his mother-in-law. But this lady manœuvred to exchange her caru with that of the daughter whereby the progeny would be born with strange attributes. The mother-in-law *i.e.* Gadhi's Queen who was a Kṣatriya woman would bring forth a son full of Brāhmanic splendour and Satyavatī, a ṛṣipatnī, would bear a son full of martial strength and glory. On the latter pleading for mercy, it was granted that her grandson would be born with these attributes, while the son would be a Brahmavādin. Thus Viśvāmitra a Kṣatriya with Brāhmanic attainments became the son of Gādhi ; Jamadagni was born to Ṛcīka, the famous Rāma Jāmadagnya (Paraśurāma) was Jamadagni's son who was a Brāhman with Kṣatriya instincts.

Jahnu——Aja——Balākāśva——Kuśika——Gādhi

Satyavatī m. Ṛcīka — Viśvāmitra

Jamadagni

Rāma Jāmadagnya.

234. The same subject is dealt with in a later context, the narrative being ascribed to Bhīṣma (XIII 4). The account is slightly elaborated. (*a*) The exchange of the carus and the trees (aśvattha and Udumbara) which they had to clasp was due to sophistry on the part of the mother of Satyavatī. There is a slight discrepancy in the genealogy : the family is said to emanate from Bharata, the regular descent being traced from Ajamīḍha downwards *i.e.* Ajamīḍha—Jahnu—Sindhudvīpa—Balākāśva—Kuśika—Gādhi etc. Ajamīḍha is here the father of Jahnu, not son. Jahnu's son is Sindhudvīpa who is not known in the other account. Compare also the Rāmāyṇaa version—Rām. I 51.18-19. See supra. (*b*) A more flagrant departure is indicated in another context *viz.* Mbh. III 115 according to which the person who grants the caru and prescribes the trees is Bhṛgu himself, the father of Ṛcīka, this seems to be unnatural and rather unjust to the son who was also a sage of no mean attainments, one who, by Varuṇa's grace, produced, as dowry for the bride whom he loved to marry, a thousand white horses with one of the ears black.

Tatas snuṣām sa bhabavān prahṛṣṭo Bhṛgur abravīt /
Varam vṛṇīṣva subhage dātā hyasmi tavepsitam /
Sā vai prasādayāmāsa tam gurum putrakāraṇāt /
Ātmanaś caiva mātuś ca prasādam ca cakāra saḥ /
(Sts. 33-34).

(*c*) Ṛcīka's son became son of Viśvāmitra (Viśvāmitrasya putratvam Ṛcīkatanayo'gamat Mbh. XII 292.13). This legend refers to Śunaśśepa being adopted by Viśvāmitra as his eldest son. According to some Śunaśśepa was Ṛcīka's son ; according to others, he was the son of Ajigarta. Śunaśśepa was also said to be a middle son. The anomaly arising out of this varied account has been fully discussed in the previous chapter.

Viśvāmitra was the progenitor of a number of Brāhman families. One of his sons, Aṣṭaka, seems to have continued his Kṣatriya heritage. But his adoption of Śunaśśepa Devarāta as the eldest of all his sons is extolled as one of his glorious achievements. This has been exhaustively dealt with in the previous chapter.

Like the Brāhman Kauśika in the Pativratopākhyāna, we find Viśvāmitra in another humiliating situation. It was a twelve-year famine, when the people had been reduced to nothingness. Famished with hunger and thirst, Viśvāmitra had to forsake his wife and children and wander about for his own sustenance. At last in the outskirts of a village he found the door of a cāṇḍāla's hut open and saw also a quartered dog's leg (śvajāghanī) hanging. So taken up with hunger, Viśvāmitra decided to seize the Śvajāghanī and eat it. Then follows a conversation between the sage and the cāṇḍāla in which the latter appeals to the former to exercise control in the interest of Dharma, for he was not only trying to eat a forbidden thing but also taking it from a man of the low caste. Viśvāmitra's conviction was only that in time of calamity there is no dharma to count ; to save one's life one may transgress the law for the moment. On coming back home, he changed his plan and decided to offer the thing first to the gods and then partake of what remains. As he was about to do this, as if that he had sufficiently tested the sage's will or as if he thought it beneath himself to eat forbidden flesh, Indra sent showers of rain immediately. The scorched earth was quenched ; the sage had not got to taste the abhakṣya (anāsvādya ca taddhaviḥ). So when calamity befalls, the wise man, should extricate himself by all means at his command. One should at all events live ; and, alive only one attains merit and prosperity.[235]

Let us now turn to study Vasiṣṭha's greatness as revealed in the Mahābhārata. Vasiṣṭha is Brahman's mind-born son[236] (Brahmaṇo mānasaḥ putraḥ) and husband of Arundhatī and also designated one of the prajāpatis, having a place in the court of Brahma. He is also among those who have become pure souls by virtue (dharmeṇaiva succtasaḥ). " Kāma (desire) and Krodha (anger), who cannot be vanquished even by the immortals, used to shampoo his feet. Though his wrath was excited by Viśvāmitra's offence, he did not yet exterminate the Kuśikas. Afflicted

235. Mbh. XII 141 (Āpaddharmaparva. conduct in time of calamity—
Āhūya devān Indrādīn bhāgam bhāgam vidhikramāt /
Etasminneva kāle tu pravavarṣa ca Vāsavaḥ /x x x
Sa samhṛtya ca tat karma anāsvādya ca taddhaviḥ /
Toṣayāmāsa devāṁś ca pitṝṁś ca dvijasattamaḥ /
Evam vidvan adīnātmā vyasanastho jijīviṣuḥ /
Sarvopāyair upāyajño dūram ātmānam uddharet /
Etām buddhim samāsthāya jīvitavyam sadā bhavet /
Jīvan puṇyam avāpnoti puruṣo bhadram aśnute /
(Sts. 99-101).

E. P. Rice thinks that Viśvāmitra " ate cāṇḍāla food and justified the act." This is however contrary to the text. (Rice's Index, p. 54). A famine in which great sages like Viśvāmitra are prostrate should indeed be terrible. The Ṛgveda records the instance of Vāmadeva (Seer of the Sixth Maṇḍala) who, in similar plight, cooked the entrails of a dog—(Śuna āntrāṇi pece). But Viśvāmitra lived on mere air for a thousand years and never breathed at all for a thousand years more ! Which of the reports could be true is a thing to wonder.

236. *Cf.* Mbh. I 174.5, II 11.18-19, III 81.12, VII 6.6, XII 166.15-16, 208.32, 334.36, 340.69.

at the loss of his sons, he did not do any dreadful deed for the destruction of Viśvāmitra. He did not transgress Kṛtānta (Death) in order to bring back his lost children from the abode of Yama. It was by obtaining him that the Ikṣvākus acquired this earth and with him as their purohita, they performed many great sacrifices."[237] Vasiṣṭha distinguished himself as purohita of other kings also. To king Samvaraṇa he did a favour by prevailing upon Sūrya to give his daughter Tapatī in marriage.[238] As purohita to Mucukunda, who conquered the earth and ruled by might only, he did penance and killed all the demon hosts let loose by Kubera.[239] At another time he was pleased with Rantideva and when there was terrible draught in the country, he sustained the people like the very lord of Creatures.[240] With the co-operation of sage Vāmadeva, he accompanied Bharata to the forest to bring Rāma back and later, anointed Rāma Dāśarathi on the throne[241] and also worshipped Kṛṣṇa while he was on his mission to Duryodhana,[242] performed a sacrifice for Kuru in Kurukṣetra on the River Sarasvatī.[243] Vasiṣṭha is further reputed to be the propagator of one of four original gotras.[244] He caused the Sarayū river to flow on earth.[245] Sage Parāśara was his grandson[246] and the great Vyāsa was the son of Parāśara.[247] In heaven Vasiṣṭha did yeoman service to Indra, fighting with the demon Vṛtra ; Indra became unconscious once ; at that time did Vasiṣṭha revive him with the Rathantara-Sāma.[248]

Apart from his being Brahma's mind-born son, Vasiṣṭha is said to have arisen from the seed of the gods which Kṛṣṇa caused to fall into a jar ; so Bhīṣma explains while expatiating on the greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.[249] The birth of the sage took place in the Eastern direction, there he became famous and there did he depart

237. Ibid. I 174.5-11.
238. Ibid. I 94.42-45, 173.26.
239. XII 74.6-7.
240. XII 234.17, XIII 137.6.
241. III 277.37, 291.66.
242. V 83.27.
243. IX 38.27.
244. XII 296.17.
Mūlagotrāṇi catvāri samutpannāni pārthiva /
Aṅgirāḥ Kaśyapaś caiva Vaśīṣṭho Bhṛgur eva ca //
245. XIII 155.21.
246. I 178.3 Son of Śakti by Adṛśyantī XII 349.6.
247. XIII 24.3.
248. XII 281.21.
249. Mbh. XIII 158.19—
Tasyāntarikṣam pṛthivī divam ca /
Sarvam vaśe tiṣṭhati śāśvatasya /
Sa kumbhe retas sasṛje surāṇām /
Yatrotpannam ṛṣim āhur Vasiṣṭham //
Kṛṣṇa, here, is to be understood, of course, in the sense of the All-powerful God, whose incarnation Kṛṣṇa was believed to be.

this world.[250] Vasiṣṭha was highly regarded as the best of Brāhmaṇas (viprāṇām śreṣṭhaḥ),[251] so much so that Indra once went in the guise of Vasiṣṭha to test the will of Śrutāvatī daughter of Bharadvāja.[252] Śrutāvatī was doing penance with the object of marrying Indra only. When the guest (Indra disguised as Vasiṣṭha) arrived, she welcomed him according to the rules laid down and humbly offered any service except her hand which was to clasp Indra's only.[253] The revered guest then gave five jujube fruits (badara), asking her to prepare a meal out of them and went away. When she set herself to the task, they would not bake at all. The fuel was exhausted, but she put her legs into the hearth as fuel, without a tremor and without a sigh. The God was pleased and took her to heaven. That holy spot is called Badarapācana.[254]

Vasiṣṭha and Arundhatī are objects of adoration and example to society. Kuntī blesses Draupadī that she may be to her husbands as Arundhatī to Vasiṣṭha, as Bhadrā to Vaiśravaṇa and as Lakṣmī to Nārāyaṇa etc.[255] Śāntā, daughter of Lomapāda, attended upon Ṛṣyaśṛṅga as devotedly as Arundhatī upon Vasiṣṭha,[256] as Lopāmudrā upon Agastya etc. When the world is beset with calamity the revered dame Arundhatī supersedes Vasiṣṭha ![257] But Arundhatī's virtue is unimpeachable as is evidenced by the story of Agni's love for the wives of the Seven Sages. Svāhā, in winning the love of Agni, could not impersonate Arundhatī, because of her spotless character as a pativratā, while she successfully impersonated the other six and bore the great War-god, Kumāra.[258] Finally Bhīṣma relates how Arundhatī preached righteousness (dharma) to the Sages, the manes and the gods,[259] concentrating upon the efficacy of gifts and of the worship of the cow. Brahmā extolled her for such salutory counsel and wished greater and greater

250. Ibid. V 108.13. Atra pūrvam Vasiṣṭhasya paurāṇasya dvijarṣabha / Sūtiś caiva pratiṣṭhā ca nidhanam ca prakāśate // Vasiṣṭha's demise came about in the form of giving up the mortal body on account of Nimi's curse : see com. Context—Supraṇa describing the importance of each of the four quarters to Gālava.

251. Ibid. VII 6.6., XII 122.31 etc.

252. Ibid., IX 48.

253. " Śakrabhaktyā ca te pāṇim na dāsyāmi kathañcana "/
Ibid. IX 48.9.

254. " Idam ca te tīrthavaram sthiram loke bhaviṣyati /
Sarvapāpāpaham subhru nāmnā Badarapācanam //
Ibid. st. 32.

255. " Yathā Vaiśravaṇe Bhadrā Vasiṣṭhe cāpyarundhatī /
Yathā Nārāyaṇe Lakṣmīs tathā tvam bhava bhartṛṣu //
Mbh. I 199.6.

256. III 113.23 " Arundhatīva subhagā Vasiṣṭham Lopāmudrā vā yathā hyagastyam ! " *Cf.* also V 117.17—Divodāsa sported with Mādhavī as Adṛśyantī with Vāsiṣṭha, and Akṣamālā with Vasiṣṭha (Vasiṣṭhaś cākṣamālayā)—Gālavacarita.

257. " Yā caiṣā viśrutā rājaṁs trailokye sādhusammatā / Arundhatī tayāpyeṣa Vasiṣṭhaḥ pṛṣṭhataḥ kṛtaḥ // VI 2.31. This of course refers to the stellar movements ; the one referred to here is an ill omen foreboding calamity, as observed by Bhīṣma before Dhṛtarāṣṭra on the eve of the Great War. Figuratively too, it is meant to suggest an upheaval in society when such a dutiful wife should disregard a saintly husband.

258. Mbh. III 226.

259. XIII 130.1-12 et seq.

glory for her austerities. On several occasions Vasiṣṭha himself is engaged in philosophic discussions with Brahmā on the one side[260] and with Karālajanaka on the other; taught higher knowledge to Nārada.[261] Hiraṇyakśipu was cursed by Vasiṣṭha son of Hiraṇyagabha because he elected a different Hotṛ priest, whereby he even before the sacrifice ended, met his own end at the hands of a very strange being.[262]

Having thus surveyed the individual life story of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra as depicted in the Mahābhārata, we may now examine the story of their age-long hostility. The Mbh. tradition, of course, takes the rivalry or even hatred between the sages as an established fact. But as they have been counted within the group of the most eminent sages, the Saptarṣis, it is also undeniable that the question of their hatred had long before been shelved. It no doubt endured in popular tradition only to do credit to both sages, the one as an embodiment of saintly excellence, the other an embodiment of the highest realisation through action (puruṣakāra). The one was born divine and the other, by tapas, attained divinity. We may now recapitulate their mutual hostility as related in the Mbh.

The Gandharva relates the story to Arjuna.[263] This old story (purāṇa) of Vasiṣṭha they tell in all worlds. In Kānyakubja, king Gādhi, son of Kuśika, had a son Viśvāmitra, who, with his ministers used to go a-hunting. Once he arrived at the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, who offered him arghya etc. from his cow Nandinī, who yielded everything desired; Viśvāmitra asked Vasiṣṭha to give him Nandinī for an *arbuda* of kine or his kingdom but in vain. Then he wanted to take the cow by force. She repaired to Vasiṣṭha, who at first did nothing saying[264] "I am a forgiving brāhman," but at last he said, "I do not abandon you! Stay if you can![265] Hearing this word, the cow attacked Viśvāmitra's troops. From her tail she began to rain showers of burning coals, from her tail she brought forth Pahlavas, from her udders Drāviḍas and Śakas, from her vitals Yavanas, from her dung Śabaras, from her urine and from her sides several other Śabaras, and from the froth of her mouth Paundras, Kirātas, Yavanas, Simhalas, Barbaras, Khasas, Cibukas, Pulindas, Cīṇas, Hūṇas, Keralas and other Mlecchas, who attacked Viśvāmitra's soldiers. Viśvāmitra's troops fled, but none was deprived of life. Viśvāmitra then, disgusted with Kṣatriya prowess,[266] set his mind on asceticism and finally became a brahman and drank soma with Indra.

260. XIII 6.
261. XII 302-309 chs.
262. Mbh. XII 342.31 (Nārāyaṇīya), the strange Being being the Man-Lion incarnation of God Nārāyaṇa.
263. Ibid I 175.
264. Kṣatriyāṇām balam tejo brāhmaṇānām kṣamā balam / St. 29.
265. Na tvām tyajāmi kalyāṇi sthīyatām yadi śakyate / St. 31.
266. " Dhig balam Kṣatriya-balam brahmatejobalam balam " St. 45.

Viśvāmitra's hatred is said to have manifested itself in another incident which appears to have some Vedic authority.[267] King Kalmāṣapāda Saudāsa of the Ikṣvāku race was cursed by Vasiṣṭha's son Śakti to become a cannibal and, unfortunately Śakti himself became the first victim. Viśvāmitra was an accomplice[268] in this dastardly act inasmuch as he directed a fiend called Kiṅkara to possess king Kalmāṣapāda. That gave him the required monstrosity to eat human beings. Vasiṣṭha was filled with sorrow at this bereavement ; but he patiently bore his grief and resolved rather to sacrifice his own life than exterminate the Kuśikas. He threw himself down from the summit of Meru, entered a huge fire in the forest, and tied a heavy weight to his neck and threw himself into the sea, but all in vain, and, in distress of heart, he returned to his hermitage. Beholding it bereft of his children, he left it again and tied himself strongly with cords and flung himself into a mighty river, but the stream cut those cords and cast the ṛṣi ashore whence that river was called Vipāśā. Once more he threw himself into a river flowing from Himavat (Haimavatī) but the river immediately fled in 100 different directions and has since been known by the name of Śatadru.[269] He now again went towards his hermitage,[270] and was, on the way, addressed by Adṛśyantī, the wife of Śakti, who had for twelve years borne his child in her womb. Hearing that child in the womb reciting the Vedas with the six aṅgas, Vasiṣṭha refrained from self-destruction[271] and, accompanied by Adṛśyantī returned to his hermitage. One day he saw Kalmāṣapāda, who would devour him. Adṛśyantī was terrified, but Vasiṣṭha restrained him by uttering " hum," and, sprinkling him with water sanctified by mantras, freed him from his curse that had lasted twelve years. Kalmāṣapāda promised never more to insult Brāhmans and prevailed upon Vasiṣṭha that he accompanied him to his capital Ayodhyā and begot a son for him on the queen. Then he went back to his hermitage. After twleve years the queen tore open her womb by a stone, and then was born the Rājarṣi Aśmaka, who founded the city of Paudanya.[272]

Arjuna asked : why did Kalmāṣapāda command his queen to go to Vasiṣṭha? And was this an act of sin on Vasiṣṭha's part? The Gandharva replied :[273] Under the influence of the curse, Kalmāṣapāda, in anger, went out of his capital, accompanied by his wife. In a solitary part of the woods he saw a Brāhman and his wife embracing each other. The couple ran away, but Kalmāṣapāda forcibly

267. The Vedic version is that Śakti was thrown into fire by the Saudāsas. *Vide* BD VI 28,34, also Sarvā (p. 25) on RV VII 32.

268. " Viśvāmitras tato rakṣa ādideśa nṛpam prati /
Śāpāt tasya tu viprarṣer Viśvāmitrasya cājñayā /
Rākṣasaḥ Kiṅkaro nāma viveśa nṛpatim tadā // "
Mbh. I 176.20-21.

269. " Śatadhā vidrutā yasmāc chatadrur iti viśrutā " Ib. I 177.9.

270. " Martum na śakyam ityuktvā punareväśramam yayau " / St. 10.

271. ' Evam uktas tayā hṛṣṭo Vasiṣṭhaḥ śreṣṭhabhāg ṛṣiḥ /
Asti santānam ityuktvā mṛtyoḥ pārtha nyavartata // St. 16.

272. Mbh. I 177.

273. Ibid. I 182.

seized the Brāhman. The Brāhmaṇī asked him to liberate her husband, but he cruelly devoured him. The tears that the woman shed blazed up like fire and consumed everything in that place. The Brāhmaṇī cursed the rājarṣi saying that he should meet with instant death when cohabiting with his wife and that his wife should have a son from Vasiṣṭha whose children he had devoured, and that child should be the propagator of his race. Then she entered the fire. Vasiṣṭha by his ascetic power immediately knew all about it. And long after this, when the Rājarṣi became freed from his curse, he approached his wife Madayantī, not remembering the curse of the Brāhmaṇī. Hearing, however, the words of his wife, he recollected the curse and therefore, he appointed Vasiṣṭha to beget a son on his queen.

Viśvāmitra's first encounter with Vasiṣṭha is somewhat differently related in another context. While describing Balarāma's pilgrimage in Śalya-parva, Vaiśampāyana relates to Janamejaya the story of how certain kings attained Brāhmanhood, and among them Viśvāmitra.[274] The great Kśatriya Gādhi Kauśika became an ascetic, having resolved to give up his body, he installed his son Viśvāmitra on the throne, notwithstanding the solicitations of his subjects, and went to heaven. Viśvāmitra however could not protect the earth even with his best exertions.[275] He then heard of a great fear of the Rākṣasas, and went out with his army. In the hermitage of Vasiṣṭha, his troops caused much mischief; when Vasiṣṭha came to the hermitage he became angry and commanded his cow to create many terrible Śabaras, who, encountering the army of Viśvāmitra caused great carnage and the troops fled away. Viśvāmitra then set his heart on ascetic austerities, and in the tīrtha of the Sarasvatī, he began to emaciate his own body,[276] although the gods repeatedly attempted to interrupt him. Brahmā granted him the boon that he should become a brāhman. Then he wandered over the whole earth like a celestial.[277]

Viśvāmitra's hatred of Vasiṣṭha appears to have been of an uncompromising and unrelenting kind as the former wished to kill the latter by any means.[278] The hermitage of Vasiṣṭha was in Sthāṇutīrtha on the bank of the Sarasvatī; on the opposite bank was the hermitage of Viśvāmitra. There Sthāṇu had practised penances, and having performed a sacrifice and worshipped the Sarasvatī, he had established a tīrtha and there the gods of yore installed Skanda. Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha everyday challenged each other in respect of the superiority of their penances. Viśvāmitra ordered the Sarasvatī, notwithstanding her trembling, to bring Vasiṣṭha into his presence, that he might slay him. Vasiṣṭha willingly let

274. IX 40.11-29.

275. " Na sa śaknoti pṛthivīm yatnavān api rakṣitum " / St.17.

276. " Jalāhāro vāyubhakṣaḥ parṇāhāraś ca so'bhavat /
Tathā sthaṇḍilaśāyī ca ye cānye niyamāḥ pṛthak /
Asakṛt tasya devās tu vratavighnam pracakrire " / Sts. 24-5.

277. " Sa labdhvā tapasogreṇa brāhmaṇatvam mahāyaśāḥ /
Vicacāra mahīm kṛtsnām kṛtakāmas suropamaḥ " / St.29.

278. Mbh. IX 42 and 43 (chs.).

her do so, lest Viśvāmitra should curse her. Sartasvatī washed away one of her banks and bore Vasiṣṭha away and informed Viśvāmitra about his arrival; but while the latter was looking for a weapon she quickly washed Vasiṣṭha back to the Eastern bank. Viśvāmitra cursed her, saying that her current should be changed into blood which is acceptable only to the Rākṣasas. For a whole year she then flowed bearing blood mixed with water. The gods, the Gandharvas, and the Apsarasas grieved. For this reason the tīrtha came to be Vasiṣṭhāpavāha.

Sarasvatī, however, once more got back her own proper condition when some sages on a pilgrimage to the holy river, having bathed in all her tīrthas, came to Vasiṣṭhāpavāha, and saw the water mixed with blood, innumerable Rākṣasas drinking it. Having learnt the cause, they worshipped Mahādeva with penances and purified the Sarasvatī.[279] The Rākṣasas, who were Brahma-Rākṣasas (so those among Vaiśyas, Śūdras and Kṣatriyas who hate and injure the brāhmans, become Rākṣasas), afflicted with hunger, sought the protection of the sages who, having ordained what should be the food of the Rākṣasas, solicited the Sarasvatī, who assumed a new shape called Aruṇā (Red River); bathing in that new river, the Rākṣasas abandoned their bodies and went to heaven. Ascertaining all this, Indra bathed there and became purified of a grievous sin (Brahmahatyā).[280]

Before taking a retrospect of the history of the two sages and their mutual realtionship, we may take note of a partial summary of Viśvāmitra's deeds, given in connection with the Śakuntalopākhyāna. Śakuntalā relates her parentage to Duṣyanta as once given out by sage Kaṇva to another sage who came as a guest. Viśvāmitra deprived Vasiṣṭha of his children. Though born as a Kṣatriya he became a brahman through his penances, and created the river Kauśikī for his ablutions. There his wife, during a famine, was maintained by the rājarṣi Mataṅga who was living as a hunter. Therefore when the famine was over, Viśvāmitra changed the name of the river into Pārā and performed a sacrifice for Mataṅga and Indra himself, from fear, came there to drink soma. Viśvāmitra in anger, created another world and a series of nakṣatras, beginning with Pratiśravaṇa and gave protection to Triśaṅku, who was cursed by his preceptor. He could burn the three worlds by his splendour, and by a kick cause the earth to shake. He could sever Meru and hurl it away at any distance. He could round the Earth, in a moment and Yama, Soma, the Maharṣis, the Sādhyas, the Viśvas and the Vālakhilyas are afraid of his prowess.[281]

279. Te sarve brāhmaṇā rājaṁs tapobhir niyamais tathā /
Upavāsaiś ca vividhair yamaiḥ kaṣṭavratais tathā /
Ārādhya paśu-bhartāram mahādevam jagatpatim /
Mokṣayāmāsus tām devīm saricchreṣṭhām Sarasvatīm /
(IX 43.14-15).

280. Arising out of the slaying of Namuci. Ibid. Sts. 33-45.

281. Mbh. I 71.29-39. The confusion in the sequence of events in this narrative is undoubted, Apsaras Menakā is pleading before Indra as to how, forsooth, could she tackle a sage of such prowess and anger. Elsewhere (in the Rām. for instance) it is represented that the Menakā episode was a stage in the sage's elevation to Brāhmanhood; possibly so, because the Bramharṣi is free from excitement, anger and passion : and Menakā provided a test. Secondly, are Mataṅga and Triśaṅku different or identical? The tenor of this passage points to their being different

From the numerous references to Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra in the Great Epics, Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, it is reasonable to deduce as follows :

(*a*) Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra had a long life of activity before they were elevated to be among the chosen Seven *i.e.* the Saptarṣis.

(*b*) Vasiṣṭha was born great, all saintliness and virtue were natural to him, he was the embodiment of patience, of the quality of Sattva. His passive resistance when attacked by the enemy appears exemplary. His attempt at self-immolation in his bereavement is somewhat strange and savours of being too commonplace. His eminence, however, as saint and priest of kings (purohita) is undoubted.

(*c*) Viśvāmitra achieved greatness. Son of a king, he perfected himself in the qualities and attainments of a rājanya ; an embodiment of the quality of Rajas, he was. But seeing that the quality of Sattva had more enduring features, determined to acquire it. The chief thing was to conquer passion and anger ; this he did achieve by penance, by patient but steadfast endeavour (puruṣakāra).

(*d*) The Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra feud reveals itself as a thing of the ancient past even in the age of the Mbh. Tradition, at any rate, believed that the two sages were once upon a time enemies of each other. The events connected therewith were remembered not because it was a quarrel between two great personalities but because it would serve as a becaon light of righteousness on the one hand and effective human endeavour on the other.

(*e*) Popular tradition betrays no partility to either of them, one, for instance, of the nature suggested by the expression " Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ," which is applied to a few verses in the Viśvāmitra-maṇḍala, said to be imprecations against the Vasiṣṭhas ; whereas no imprecation in the Vasiṣṭha-maṇḍala is ever regarded as despising the Viśvāmitras. The Mbh. age conceives the sages as equally respectable ; there was no question of their relative superiority. On the other hand, a word should be said to the credit of the self-made saint Viśvāmitra, who, by dint of his achievement, had inspired the people with a reverential awe. The world was amazed at his powers of making or unmaking it. It was not much wonder that he could as well be one of the four founders of Brāhman tribes as it were and hence an inspirer of a tradition by itself ; a veritable sampradāya-pravartaka.

HARIVAMŚA

One incident connected with Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra is pointedly dealt with in the Harivaṁśa, that is about Satyavrata.[282] He was the son of king Trayyāruṇa

persons, though they are possibly identical with one another, as is stated in another context. (*Vide* VP Wilson vol. III pp. 284 ff. as referred to in his MOST I. p. 375 f. See VP text IV 3.13, compare also Hari. 12 and 13, where Vasiṣṭha is also introduced). The anomalies in the narrative of Viśvāmitra's deeds, as shown above, may be of no serious consequence when we remember that the narrator was Śakuntalā, who in her unsophisticated innocence recalled the events of a bygone age just as they occurred to her mind. They have no chronological value.

282. Hari. chs. 12 and 13.

who had Vasiṣṭha for his priest. Once Satyavrata carried away a bride who had been betrothed to another. King Trayyāruṇa abandoned the son on this account whereupon the latter lived among the low caste people in a degraded condition. The old king went to the forest, for penance. Vasiṣṭha himself managed the affairs of State, A twelve year draught then set in as result of *adharma* for which Satyavrata was responsible. The latter, however, nourished a sense of anger against Vasiṣtsha because he did not exert his influence to dissuade the king from the drastic punishment which was inflicted on the Prince. At this time, Viśvāmitra had left his family and children there and gone to the shores of the ocean for penance. When the famine set in, the family was reduced to severe straits. Viśvāmitra's wife was about to sell away her middle son (Gālava) for a hundred cows in order to sustain the rest. Meanwhile Satyavrata intervened and liberated the boy, and, until Viśvāmitra returned from penance, provided them with venison and pork which he (every day) tied to a tree near their residence. To Visaṣṭha, however, he never reconciled himself; and once when he could not procure food anywhere, he happened to see Vasiṣṭha's all-bestowing cow which he at once killed and fed himself and Viśvāmitra's family. Vasiṣṭha got angry and denounced the offender as Triśaṅku, one who has committed three sins, *viz.* causing displeasure to the father, killing the preceptor's cow and eating unsprinkled food.[283] Now Viśvāmitra returned from austerities and was much pleased with Satyavrata for the support he gave for his family in his absence. Asked to elect a favour in return, the outcast Prince prayed that he might be enabled to ascend Heaven bodily. The famine having abated, Visvāmitra reinstated him on the throne and sacrificed for him so that, as all gods and even Vasiṣṭha could see, sent Triśaṅku bodily to Heaven. The famous Hariścandra was the son of this King Satyavarta Triśaṅku.[284]

Viśvāmitra's lineage, the adoption of Śunaśśepa Devarāta into his family with all rights of primogeniture, and the ever-baffling host of sons and families that emanated from him have been accounted in the Harivaṁśa.[285] These have been fully discussed in the foregoing chapters in various contexts. So far as genealogies go, the accounts in the Hari. add to the confusion. Śunaśśepa is the middle son with Jamadagni for his elder brother and Śunaḥpuccha for the younger ![286] Viśvāmitra's original name was Viśvaratha,[287] not the only son of Gādhi, he had brothers as well, Viśvakṛt, and Viśvajit, and a sister Satyavatī,

283. aprokṣitopayogāt asamskṛtamāmsabhakṣaṇāt Ib. XIII 18.

284. Hari. XIII 18-19.
Pituś cāparitoṣeṇa guror dogdhrīvadhena ca /
Aprokṣitopayogāc ca trividhas te vyatikramaḥ /
Evam trīṇyasya śaṅkūni tāni dṛṣṭvā mahātapāḥ /
Triśaṅkur iti hovāca Triśaṅkur iti sa smṛtaḥ //

285. Ibid. XXVII

286. Ibid. Sts. 41-42.

287. Viśvāmitras tu dharmātmā nāmnā Viśvarathas smṛtaḥ /
Jajñe Bhṛguprasādena Kauśikād Vamśavardhanaḥ // St. 44.

ungest of them all.[288] One is tempted to think that all the three names śvaratha, Viśvakṛt and Viśvajit are only epithets[289] of Viśvāmitra who ssessed all the qualities connoted by those names: the course of his chariot tended over all the three worlds; he was world-maker (anyam Indram kariṣyāmi c.) and world-conqueror.

VII

PURĀṆAS

Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are familiar personalities in the entire range of ırāṇic literature. Both sages were revered. Vasiṣṭha was regarded as one of e mind-born sons of Brahmā.[290] He and Viśvāmitra are both counted among the ven holy sages (Saptarṣis) of the Vaivasvata-manvantara.[291] Between them, ey have rendered so many places on the banks of the Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā holy account of one or other of their great achievements. Quite new incidents have en recorded about them, as we shall see presently. Their rivalry or hostility a thing of the past, not endangering the reputation of either, of course. Neverless the several incidents which mark their mutual jealousy and hatred are rrated with ever-changing colours.

While Vasiṣṭha was described as a mind-born son of the Creator, we see a cond birth become necessary for him on account of the curse of Nimi! The story thus told in the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa: The son of Ikṣvāku, who was named Nimi, stituted a sacrifice that was to endure for a thousand years, and applied to ısiṣṭha to offer the oblations. Vasiṣṭha in answer said that he had been

288. Viśvāmitras tu Gādheyo rājā Viśvarathas tadā /
Viśvakṛd Viśvajiccaiva tathā Satyavatī nṛpa / Ib. XXXII 51-3.
—Satyavatī Viśvāmitrādīnām Kanīyasī (com.)

289. Pargiter thinks that Viśvaratha was his original name. That is how it looks from XVII 44. But seeing that coupled with two more names in XXXII 51-52, it is better to conceive as epithets. The name Viśvāmitra itself appears to be an acquired name. His real name pears to be unknown.

290. See, for instance, Brahma I 43.4, Viṣṇu I 7.5, Brahmāṇḍa II 11, Matsya 3.6-7, āgavata III 12.22-24, Vāyu 25.82, etc. The number of these mānasa-putras ranges from o 10. Vasiṣṭha married Ūrjjā (Energy), one of the 24 daughters of Patriarch Dakṣa, and had en sons by her, namely, Rajas, Gātra, Ūrdhvabāhu, Savana, Anagha, Sutapas and Śukra. ṣṇu I 10.13 f). The famous Śakti and other sons are from a different marriage evidently—ṣamālā or Arundhatī.

291. The Seven Sages are supposed to be different in each Manvantara. For instance in third *i.e.* Auttami Manvantara. (*Vide* Viṣṇu III 1.15) the seven sons of Vasiṣṭha were the en Ṛṣis. Strange, however, that the father is one of the seven sages only in a later *i.e.* the enth Manvantara (Vaivasvata). It must be a descendant of the progenitor of the Vasiṣṭha nily. Incidentally, it may be noted, that the entire cosmogony changes from Manvantara to nvantara. Different is Indra, different are the classes of gods, the divine sages etc. This ciful picture is ably satirised by Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣita in his Campū, the Nīlakaṇṭha-Vijaya. the outer chamber of Brahma's Palace, a number of Potentates are waiting for an interview h the Highest one. Indra went up to the door, the Lord-in-Waiting asks : "Indra of what e are you?" (Katamaḥ Purandaraḥ)! The accounts in the Purāṇas and the Upapurāṇas taining to the creation are by no means consistent. They baffle all attempts at a clear delinea-ı. One may however benefit from a perusal of the notes provided by H. H. Wilson in his ıslation of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa Books I to III.

pre-engaged by Indra for five hundred years, but if the king would wait for some time, he would come and officiate as superintending priest. The king made no answer, and Vasiṣṭha went away supposing that he had assented. When the sage had completed the performance of the ceremonies he had conducted for Indra, he returned with all speed to Nimi, purposing to render him the like office. When he arrived, however, and found that Nimi had retained Gautama and other priests to minister at his sacrifice, he was much displeased and pronounced upon the king, who was then asleep, a curse to the effect that since he had not intimated his intention, but transferred to Gautama the duty he had first entrusted to himself, Vasiṣṭha, Nimi should thenceforth cease to exist in corporeal form. When Nimi woke up and knew what had happened, he in return denounced as an imprecation upon his unjust preceptor, that he also should lose his bodily existence as punishment for uttering a curse upon him before communicating with him. Nimi then abandoned his bodily condition. The spirit of Vaiṣṭha also leaving his body was united with the spirits of Mitra and Varuṇa for a season until, through their passion for the celestial nymph Urvaśī the sage was reborn. The corpse of Nimi was preserved from decay by being embalmed with fragrant oils and resins. When the sacrifice was concluded, the gods who had come to receive their portions were willing to restore him to bodily life, but Nimi declined to resume a corporeal shape. He wished, however, to dwell in the eyes of all beings. To this desire, the gods assented and Nimi was placed by them in the eyes of all living creatures, in consequence of which their eyelids are ever opening and closing.[292]

Vasiṣṭha was responsible for the banishment of Vikukṣi by his father Ikṣvāku. Upon one of the days called Aṣṭakā, Ikṣvāku being desirous of celebrating ancestral obsequies, ordered Vikukṣi, to bring him flesh suitable for the offering. The prince accordingly went into the forest and killed many deer, and other wild animals for the ceremony. Being weary with the chase and being hungry, he sat down and ate a hare ; after which, being refreshed, he carried the rest of the game to his father. Vasiṣṭha the family priest of the House of Ikṣvāku was summoned to consecrate the food, but he declared that it was impure, in consequence of Vikukṣi having eaten a hare from amongst it (making it thus, as it were, the remnant of his meal). Vikukṣi was in consequence abandoned by his offended father and the epithet Śaśāda (hare-eater) was given to him being so described by the preceptor.[293]

Turning to Viśvāmitra, we find that his descent is traced to Jahnu, who in turn was descended from Amāvasu son of Aila. Viśvāmitra is the son of Gādhi and grandson of Kuśika according to Brahma-purāṇa, of Kuśāmba according to

292. Viṣṇu IV 1-9 (sections in prose style). *Vide* also : Matsya 61.32-6, 201.1-17, Padma V 22.34.-37, Vāyu 89.4 ; Brahmāṇḍa III 64.4, Bhāgavata IX 13.1-6, Rām. VII 55.56,57. According to Pargiter, there were two kings of the name, one of Videha and another of Vidarbha ; Nimi is also a ṛṣi belonging to the Ātreyas. Nimi of the episode in question must be of Videha (Vi-deha = bodiless) as the name itself suggests. (AIHT : consult the Index). Slight variations may be perceived in the different Purāṇas cited above. *cf.* AIHT p. 215.

293. Viṣṇu IV 2.5-7, *cf.* also Vāyu 88.11-19, Brahma 7.48-51, Brahmāṇḍa III 63.11-20.

Viṣṇu-Purāṇa.[294] These are minor differences; one thing is certain, Viśvāmitra, at all events, was born in a line of kings but became a Brahmarṣi by resolve. His association with the Śunaśśepa legend, as told in the Purāṇas, has been fully discussed in the previous chapter.

The incident of having to eat dog's flesh for want of better food during a twelve-year famine was the occasion for a discourse between Viśvāmitra and a Cāṇḍāla from whose house, the sage was about to make away with "dog's leg" (śva-jāghanī), on the right or wrong of such an action. Ultimately Indra opened his eyes and showered rain to end the famine. The Brahma purāṇa describes this story more picturesquely.[295] Once there occurred a terrible draught, there was nowhere food available. Viśvāmitra repaired to the holy river Gautamī. Seeing his wife, children and disciples emaciated with hunger, the sage ordered the pupils to hunt up something to eat without delay. They roamed about and brought a dead dog which was all they could find. Viśvāmitra said: "Very well, cut it up, wash and roast it; we shall, according to rule, propitiate the gods, sages, and the manes and then partake of the ramainder." The pupils obeyed. Agni came, the gods' messenger, was astonished to see the offering and told the gods that they have to eat dog's flesh which the sage in distress has offered. To prevent such a base offering, Indra came as an eagle and carried away the vessel which contained the flesh. The sage was wrath when the pupils reported this and was about to curse when Indra transformed the contents into honey and replaced the vessel. But Viśvāmitra demanded the dog's flesh itself on pain of being reduced to ashes. Afraid of consequences, Indra came up and said, "why bother about the inedible dog's flesh, pour the honey-oblation and drink the rest in the company of your children." Viśvāmirra replied, 'what use with one such meal? All people are suffering, then what is the good of this honey? If it should become nectar for all, then only I would have it pure, otherwise, gods and manes shall eat this flesh of the dog. And then I shall also eat it, to be sure."[296] Realising the danger, Indra immediately summoned the clouds and showered nectar-like rain on earth. There was joy everywhere. Thenceforth that place on the Gautamī became famous as Viśvāmitra-tīrtha.

294. Brahma 10.11-68, Viṣṇu IV 7.1-16, Vāyu 91.49-103, reads Kuśāśva for Kuśika, Brahmāṇḍa III 66.23-69.

295. Brahma 93.4-24. *cf.* Mbh. XII 141. supra p.

296. Viśvāmitro'pi netyāha bhuktenaikena kim phalam /
Prajās sarvāś ca sīdanti kim tena madhunā hare /
Sarveṣām amṛtam cetsyāt bhokṣye'ham amṛtam śuci /
Athavā devapitaro bhokṣyantīdam śvamāṁsakam /
Paścād aham tacca māṁsam bhokṣye nānṛtam asti me /
Tato bhītas Sahasrākṣo meghānāhūya tatkṣaṇāt /
Vavarṣa cāmṛtam vāri hyamṛtenārpitāḥ prajāḥ //
Ibid. sts. 20-23.

There is no doubt that the outline of the story given in the Mbh. is here expanded and embellished so as to make it attractive to those for whom the literature was meant. That these sages with all their divine powers had to suffer earthly ills as hunger and thirst is hard to reconcile.

Now remain the legend of Kalmāṣapāda and that of Satyavrata Triśaṅku, both of which remind the world of the ancient feud between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. The Viṣṇu-purāṇa narrates the first story as follows : Mitrasaha, son of Sudāsa of Ayodhyā once celebrated a sacrifice which was conducted by Vasiṣṭha. At the close of the rite, Vasiṣṭha went out. At that time a Rākṣasa assumed the semblance of Vasiṣṭha and came and said to the king : "Now that the sacrifice is ended, you must give me flesh to eat ; let it be cooked and I, will presently return." Having said this, he withdrew, and, transforming himself into the shape of the cook, dressed some human flesh, which he brought to the king, who, receiving it on a plate of gold, awaited the reappearance of Vasiṣṭha. As soon as the sage returned, the king offered him the dish. Vasiṣṭha, surprised at such want of propriety in the king, as his offering him meat to eat, considered what it should be that was so presented and by the efficacy of his meditations discovered that t was human flesh. He grew angry and denounced a curse upon the king saying : ' Inasmuch as you have insulted all such holy men as we are, by giving me what s not to be eaten, your appetite shall henceforth be excited by similar food.

" It was yourself," replied the king to the indignant sage, " who commanded his food to be prepared." " By me !" exclaimed Vasiṣṭha, " how could that have been ?" and, again, having recourse to meditation, he detected the whole ruth. Foregoing then all displeasure towards the king, he said : " The food to which I have sentenced you shall not be your sustenance for ever, it shall only be o for twelve years." The king who had taken up water in the palm of his hand and was prepared to curse the sage, now considered that Vasiṣṭha was his spiritual guide, and being reminded by Madayantī his queen that it ill became him to denounce an imprecation upon a holy teacher, who was the guardian divinity of his race, abandoned his intention. Unwilling to cast the water upon the earth, lest it hould wither up the grain, for it was impregnated with his malediction, and equally reluctant to throw it up into the air lest it should blast the clouds and dry up heir contents, he threw it down upon his own feet. Scalded by the heat which he water had derived from his angry imprecation, the feet of the king became potted black and white, and he thence obtained the name of Kalmāṣapāda or he with the spotted feet.

In consequence of the curse of Vasiṣṭha, the king became a cannibal every ixth watch of the day for twelve years, and in that state wandered through the orests, and devoured multitudes of men. One occasion, he beheld a holy person ngaged in sport with his wife. As soon as they saw his terrific form, they were frightened and endeavoured to escape. But the royal cannibal overtook and eized the husband. The wife then also desisted from flight, and earnestly entreated the savage to spare her lord exclaiming, " Thou, Mitrasaha, art the pride of the royal House of Ikṣvāku, not a malignant fiend ! It is not in thy nature, who knowest he characters of women, to carry off and devour my husband." But all was in ain, and, regardless of her repeated supplications, he ate the Brahman, as a tiger

and said, " Since you have barbarously disturbed the joys of a wedded pair and killed my husband, your death shall be the consequence of your associating with your queen." So saying, she entered the flames.

At the expiration of the period of his curse, Saudāsa returned home. Being reminded of the curse of the Brāhmaṇī by his wife Madayantī, he abstained from conjugal intercourse and was therefore childless. But having solicited the interposition of Vasiṣṭha, Madayantī became pregnant. The child however was not born for seven years, when the queen, becoming impatient, divided the womb with a sharp stone and was thereby delivered. The child was thence called Aśmaka.[297]

The above account is corroborated by the Bhāgavata.[298] As it is, it shows no interference on the part of Viśvāmitra in the affair of Vasiṣṭha and Kalmāṣapāda. The Mbh. supplies the link *viz.* that the Rākṣasa, who played the mischief by impersonating Vasiṣṭha for the moment, was employed by Viśvāmitra.[299] This was specially so when, according to Mbh., the king was cursed by Śakti son of Vasiṣṭha. Nevertheless, some disagreements among the several authorities must be acknowledged with regard to this story. According to the Bṛhaddevatā, at a great sacrifice by Sudās, Viśvāmitra was overcome by Śakti. Consequently Viśvāmitra sank down unconscious. But to him the Jamadagnis gave speech called Sasarparī, having brought her from the dwelling of the Sun. That speech dispelled the Kuśikas' loss of intelligence (a-matim).[300] The Sarvānukramaṇī, introducing RV VII 32, says that Śakti, thrown to the fire by the Saudāsas, composed the last pragāthā, but before he finished, he was consumed ; Vasiṣṭha completed it.[301] The Bṛhaddevatā, again, points out that Vasiṣṭha's hundred sons were killed by the Saudāsas or by Sudāsa who in consequence of a curse had been transformed into a Rakṣas.[302] Now it is this story that is found elaborated in the Mbh. The other two stories are not traced in the Purāṇas.[303]

The Mahābhārata relates the conflict[304] between Śakti and Kalmāṣapāda for precedence of giving way in the road,[305] the king beat him with a whip whereupon Śakti cursed him to become a cannibal. At this stage it is reported that Viśvāmitra

297. Viṣṇu IV 4.19-38.

298. Bhāgavata IX 9.18-39. *Vide* also Rām. VII 65 and Bṛhannāradīya IX 3-151.

299. Mbh. I 176. see infra.

300. BD IV 112-114. Sasarparī is called Sūryasya duhitā in RV III 53.15. " Sasarparīḥ sarvatra gadyapadyātmakatvena sarpaṇaśīlā vāgdevatā "—Sāyaṇa. BD hereby suggests that the other Kuśikas, as well as Viśvāmitra, had been rendered unconscious by Śakti. *cf.* Śiṣya on Sarvā. p. 107.

301. Sarvā. p. 25 and Śiṣya thereon, p. 130 f.

302. BD VI 28 and 33-34. " Such is the sacred tradition." (iti vai Śrutiḥ). Note that the 100 sons are meant here whereas Śakti's death is not specified.

303. AIHT p. 208, n.5. The two stories are Śakti overcoming Viśvāmitra and his being thrown into the fire by the followers of Sudās.

304. *Vide* Mbh. I 176, 177 and 182.

305. " Mama panthā mahārāja dharma eṣa sanātanaḥ /
Rājñā sarveṣu dharmeṣu deyaḥ panthā dvijātaye //
Ibid. 176.8.

who watched the incident, himself remaining invisible, directed a Rākṣasa to possess the king.[306] Denounced by the curse, Kalmāṣapāda happened to offend a Brāhman guest by offering human flesh as food. He again cursed him. The cannibal in him was now roused and poor Śakti became the first victim ; and later on his younger brothers also were devoured. Vasiṣṭha bore the grief when he learnt that Śakti's wife Adṛśyantī was pregnant, so that there would be progeny to continue the line. It so happened that, as he returned to his abode with the daughter-in-law, they happened to encounter the cannibal king. Adṛśyantī got terrified, but Vasiṣṭha put down the demon by a huṅkāra, which ended the curse actually and restored the distressed king to normal life and thinking. Coming back to his old self, Kalmāṣapāda paid due homage to Vasiṣṭha and, later on, requested him to beget a son on his queen Madayantī, which extraordinary procedure became necessary on account of a Brāhmaṇī's curse during his cursed life when he deprived her of her joy with the husband by devouring him. Thus we see that the Rakṣas who was set upon the depraved king was responsible for all the misery of Vasiṣṭha and the death of his sons.

Among the stories that centre round Viśvāmitra, that of Satyavrata Triśaṅku has somewhat pre-eminently caught the Purāṇic fancy.[307] Trayyāruṇa was a king of the Ikṣvāku race. His son was Satyarvata who got the appellation of Triśaṅku and was degraded to the condition of cāṇḍāla, or outcast. According to Vāyu-purāṇa he was banished by his father for his wickedness (adharma). The Brahma and Harivaṁśa detail his inequity at length. He carried off the betrothed wife of a citizen, as the wedding ceremony was in progress. He was therefore banished by the father and directed to live among the śvapākas (dog-eaters). Vasiṣṭha did not intercede. Then there came a terrible famine in which Indra did not shower rain for twelve years. Viśvāmitra had left his wife and children in that country and gone to the shores of the sea for penance. In this situation, Satyavrata provided the flesh of deer for the sustenance of the family, suspending it upon a spreading fig-tree on the borders of the Ganges, that he might not subject them to the indignity of receiving at the hands of an outcast. Viśvāmitra's wife was even prepared to sell her middle son for a hundred cows, tying a collar round the neck, perhaps to proclaim him for sale (gale baddhvā). Satyavrata interceded and got him liberated ; the boy came to be known as Gālava. Thus did Satyavarta spend the twelve years, proving all the while helpful to Viśvāmitra's family but bearing unrelenting hatred against Vasiṣṭha as the latter did not sympathise with him. Once while he had to hunt up food, and when game failed, he killed the cow of Vasiṣṭha. Whereupon, the preceptor denounced him as Triśaṅku, " one who has committed three sins," *viz.* displeasing the father, killing a cow and eating

306. Just when the offending king was about to apologise, Viśvāmitra directed the fiend to possess him, and by his supernatural powers incited both the parties to excesses. The prime cause for all this was the hostility between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. The latter had asked the king to perform a sacrifice with him as priest, whereas Vasiṣṭha was the family priest. The king naturally preferred him. So Viśvāmitra was bent upon harassing both. Ibid. 176.4 and 15-22.

307. Viṣṇu IB 3.13-14, Brahma 7.97 to 8.28, Brahmāṇḍa III 63.77-114, Vāyu 88.78-116, Bhāgavata IX 7.4-5 etc. *cf.* Hari. 12.11 to 13.28.

flesh not previously consecrated. Returning from penance, Viśvāmitra was very much pleased with Triśaṅku's friendly services and pressed him to choose a boon. Satyavrata wished to be bodily elevated to Heaven. Viśvāmitra installed him on the throne and as all, including Vasiṣṭha, could see, celebrated a sacrifice and sent him bodily to heaven. It was seen in the foregoing pages how, according to the Rāmāyaṇa, Viśvāmitra was prepared to contend not only with one individual Vasiṣṭha, but with the whole host of the gods. When he was out to sacrifice for an outcast, the gods naturally did not heed for he was acting against Ṛta, established path. But he was determined to please them or have his own way by creating, by means of his supernatural powers, a different Indra and a different firmament with full stellar and planetary complement. The gods had but to acknowledge the force of his determination and compromise with him, with the result that Triśaṅku was left suspended in mid-air, forming a constellation in the southern hemisphere along with other new planets and stars created by Viśvāmitra. The Bhāgavata says admiringly that Triśaṅku is still visible in the sky (aydāpi divi dṛśyate). The Vāyu furnishes some further information. "Men acquainted with the Purāṇas recite these two stanzas : 'By the favour of Viśvāmitra, the illustrious Triśaṅku shines in heaven along with the gods, through the kindness of that sage. Slowly passes the lovely night in winter, embellished by the moon, decorated with three watches and ornamented with the constellation Triśaṅku.'"[308] Triśaṅku is identified with the Orion, the three bright stars of his belt being the three śaṅkus, (stakes or pins) which form his name.

The Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra feud reaches its climax in the story of Hariścandra, son of Satyavrata Triśaṅku. According to the Śunaśśepa legend related in the AB and other works, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were high priests co-operating with the sacrifice performed by Hariścandra. It might then be a subsequent event in the life of that king, if not fabricated by the fertile imagination of the story-teller. The Mārkaṇḍeya-purāṇa[309] expands the story at considerable length. One day

308. "Atrāpyudāharantīmau ślokau paurāṇikā janāḥ /
Viśvāmitraprasādena Triśaṅkur divi rājate /
Devais sārdham mahātejā'nugrahāt tasya dhīmataḥ /
Śanair yātyabalā ramyā hemante candramaṇḍitā /
Alaṅkṛtā tribhir bhāvais triśaṅkugrahabhūṣitā /
Vāyu 88.114-116.

Wilson's emendation niśā in the place of abalā is better, though he did not find ms. evidence therefor. But abalā yields no sense and has no antecedent in the text ; it might be dyaus, but the epithet abalā is hardly appropriate. Wilson has yāmaiḥ for bhāvaiḥ. The Ānand SS. edition records no v.l. *cf.* Wilson's Translation of Viṣṇu, p. 372 footnote.

309. Mārk. cantos 7-9. This theme has been dramatised by Kṣemīśvara in his Caṇḍa-Kauśika (10th or 11th cent. A.D.). More imaginative is the title given to vernacular plays on the subject : Satya-Hariścandra. Popular impression now is that Viśvāmitra was a cruel sage and all that. How different from the Vedic Viśvāmitra, "heaven-born, favourite of the gods, great sage." (Mahan ṛṣir devajā devajūtaḥ. RV III 53.9). One is tempted to ask whether or to what extent, if at all, has the cause of TRUTH been served by unbridled tradition, by the unscrupulous story-teller of Harikathā-performer, or even by the high handed poet. In fact TRUTH has been at the mercy of these factors. Says a Subhāṣita—

He Rājānas tyajata sukavipremabandhe virodham
Śuddhā kīrtis sphurati bhavatām nūnam etatprasādāt //
Tuṣṭair baddham tad alaghu Raghusvāminas saccaritram
Ruṣṭair nītas tribhuvanajayī hāsyamārgam daśāsyaḥ //

while Hariścandra was hunting he heard female lamentations, which proceeded " from the Sciences who were being mastered by the austerely fervid sage Viśvāmitra and were crying out in alarm at his superiority." Hariścandra, as the defender of the distressed, went to the rescue, but Viśvāmitra was so provoked by his interference that the Sciences instantly perished and Hariścandra was reduced to a state of abject helplessness. Viśvāmitra demanded the sacrificial gift due to him as a Brāhman and the king offered him whatever he might choose to ask, ' gold, his own son, wife, body, life, kingdom, good fortune,' whatever was dearest. Viśvāmitra stripped him of his wealth and kingdom, leaving him nothing but a garment of bark and his wife and son. In a state of destitution, he left his kingdom and Viśvāmitra struck Śaibyā, the queen, with his staff to hasten her reluctant departure. To escape from his oppressor he proceeded to the holy city of Benares, but the relentless sage was waiting for him and demanded the completion of his gift. With bitter grief, wife and child were sold, and there remained only himself. Dharma, the god of justice, appeared in the from of a hideous and offensive Cāṇḍāla and offered to buy him. Notwithstanding the exile's repugnance and horror, Viśvāmitra insisted upon the sale, and Hariścandra was carried off " bound, beaten, confused and afflicted," to the abode of the cāṇḍāla. He was then employed at the grave-yard to collect clothes etc. from the dead bodies. In this horrid place and degrading work he spent twelve months. His wife then came to the cemetery to perform the obsequies of her son, who had died of serpent bite. They recognised each other and resolved to die upon the funeral pyre of their son, though Hariścandra hesitated to take away his own life without the consent of the master. After all was prepared, he gave himself up to meditation on Viṣṇu. The gods then arrived, headed by Dharma and accompanied by Viśvāmitra. Dharma entreated him to refrain from his intention, and Indra informed him "that he, his wife, and son, had conquered heaven by their good works." Hariścandra declared that he could not go to heaven without the permission of his master the cāṇḍāla. Dharma then revealed himself. When this difficulty was removed, Hariścandra objected to go to heaven without his faithful subjects. This request was granted by Indra and after Viśvāmitra had inaugurated Rohitāśva, the king's son, to be his successor, Hariścandra, his friends and followers, all ascended in company to heaven. There he was induced by the sage Nārada to boast of his merits and this led to his expulsion from heaven. As he was falling he repented for his fault and was forgiven. His downward course was arrested and he and his followers dwell in any aerial city, which, according to popular belief, is still visible occasionally in mid-air.

The indignation of Vasiṣṭha at Viśvāmitra's insatiableness produced a quarrel, in which their mutual imprecations changed them to two birds, the Śarāli (āḍi) and the Baka.[310] In these forms they fought for a considerable term until Brahma

310. Āḍī is a kind of heron, and Baka is the crane, the former being of a portentous height of 2,000 yojanas (= 18000 miles) and the latter of 3090 yojanas. Their very movements would shake the earth, how much more when they pull up their energy to kill each other. Ref. Mārk. ch. 9. See also MOST I p. 379 et seq and p. 386 f.

interposed and reconciled them. The Bhāgavata[311] alludes to this story, in its notice of Hariścandra.

This section may be concluded with two impressions: 1. The Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra rivalry, though a thing of the ancient past, is a reality in the conception of the Purāṇas. In fact, it is never doubted. Similarly, it was the belief that Viśvāmitra was born in a Kṣatriya race, but elevated himself to Brāhmanhood by penance. 2. Secondly, under cover of tradition, new stories have sprung up to illustrate the mutual hatred of the two sages. The story of Saudāsa Kalmāṣapāda took its origin in the BD[312] but expanded with fanciful structure in Mbh. and the Purāṇas. The first record of Triśaṅku story was in the Epics (Rām. and Mbh.) and further elaborated in the various Purāṇas. The story of Hariścandra germinating in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, in which the sages are not enemies if not friends of each other, transformed itself into a classic as it were, to depict the very climax of their enmity. Justification for all this fabrication is that unshakable, mysterious TRADITION !

VIII

RECENT OPINIONS

In the study of the life history of the sages Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, who are reputed personalities from Vedic times, we have naturally to delve deep into the literature of the Vedas for a true understanding. As time advanced and tradition spread through diverse channels, it is natural that the original structure of their story got hazy if not distorted. John Muir very effectively advocated a return to the study of the originals. He said:[313] " The Vedic hymns being far more ancient than the Epic and Purāṇic complications must be more trustworthy guides to a knowledge of the remotest Indian antiquity. While the epic poems and the Purāṇas no doubt embody numerous ancient traditions, yet these have been freely altered according to the caprice or dogmatic views of later writers, and have received many purely fictitious additions. The Vedic hymns on the contrary have been preserved unchanged from a very remote period and exhibit a faithful reflection of the social, religious and ecclesiastical condition of the age in which they were composed and of the feelings which were awakened by contemporary occurrences. As yet there was no conscious perversion or colouring of facts for dogmatic or sectarian purposes.... It is here therefore that we may look for some light on the real relat ons between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra."

311. Traiśaṅkayo Hariścandro Viśvāmitra-Vasiṣṭhayoḥ /
Yannimittam abhūd yuddham pakṣiṇor bahuvārṣikam // Bhā. IX 7.6.

312. BD VI 28 and 34. The germ of the story is however seen in the TS and the Brāhmaṇas, which depict that Vasiṣṭha's sons were killed by the Saudāsas. The sage then saw the rite of forty-nine nights etc. to obtain progeny as well as to take revenge against the Saudāsas. ' Vasiṣṭho hataputro ' kāmayata vindeya prajām abhi Saudāsāu bhaveyam iti ' *cf.* TS VII 4.7. KB IV,8, PB IV 7.3, etc.

313. MOST I p. 318. *cf.* Max Muller ASL p. 37.

The whole inquiry centres round the following issues :

(1) The identity of the two sages.

(2) Had Viśvāmitra any claim for kingship by birth or by acquisition ?

(3) Did Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra ever hate each other ?

It is acknowledged on all hands that both Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were highly esteemed as Ṛṣis, seers of entire Maṇḍalas of the Ṛgveda. That one was a Brahmṛṣi and the other a Rājarṣi promoted to the rank of Brahmaṣi is an idea quite foreign to the Veda. Regarding Viśvāmitra, the Vedic Index says[314] " There is no trace of his kingship in the RV, but the Nirukta (II 24) calls his father Kuśika, a king ; the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VII 18.9) refers to Śunaśśepa as succe ding to the lordship of the Jahnus as well as the divine lore of the Gāthins, and the Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa (xxi.12.2) mentions Viśvāmitra as a king. But there is no real trace of this kingship of Viśvāmitra. It may probably be dimissed as mere legend with no more foundation at most than that Viśvāmitra was of a family which once had been royal. But even this is doubtful."[315]

Regarding the strife between Visiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, Oldenberg holds that it " is not to be found in the Ṛgveda. On the other hand, Geldner is hardly right in finding in RV a compressed account indicating the rivalry of Śakti, Vasiṣṭha's son, with Viśvāmitra, the acquisition by Viśvāmitra of special skill in speech and the revenge of Viśvāmitra who secured the death of Śakti by Sudās's servants."[316] These pictures, we have seen, were only supplied by tradition, [317] and not by the text of RV. As we look back at the Veda, through the colourful foreground of legendary matter provided by later literature, the mind is so caught up by the tales and hence somewhat vitiated in its appreciation of the Vedic origin. One is apt to be guided away by high authorities like the Bṛhaddevatā and the Sarvānukramaṇī when they introduce the Ṛgvedic passages in an attractive legendary setting. These works themselves are ancient and moreover they have the unassailable TRADITION to inspire credence. Thus in the Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra relationship, to quote tradition or even to imagine it will not be subject to any doubt. So eminent a seer was Vasiṣṭha, heaven-born ; how ever could a mortal like Viśvāmitra, himself seer though, vie with him ? In a controversy, or a philosophic discussion in a sacrificial essembly (sadas), Viśvāmitra could not stand the attack of Vasiṣṭha's son the learned Śakti, with the result that he was silenced. Bearing a grudge against Śakti, Viśvāmitra bided his time and with the help of the Saudāsas brought about his death. Now Vasiṣṭha the aggrieved father had to take notice of it all ; hence, he saw the Rākṣoghna-sūkta or perform a rite of forty-nine nights to avenge the death of his son or sons.[318] This is a perfectly reasoned

314. VI, Vol. II, p. 311.

315. Criticised by Pargiter. AIHT pp. 12-13.

316. VI Vol. II, p. 275 f.

317. e.g. BD VI 34 (iti vai Śrutiḥ), Sarvā. p. 107 (prāhur itihāsam purātanam) or, p. 133 (āsām prasvāpinītvam tu kathāsu parikalpyate) ; etc.

318. See supra note.

story but the regret of the inquirer will be when in the Vedic Text, he neither finds even a remote reference to the alleged events nor anything pointing to them in the very mantras which are set in their framework. The meaning of the mantras bears no relevancy to the fancied story.[319] The Śakti-Viśvāmitra controversy is superimposed on RV III 53.15-16 ; and the killing of Śakti on RV VII 32.26—these are sufficient to illustrate the above contention that the later stories have had no foundation in the original text. Then tradition alone is their resort ; and tradition is mysterious and has to be regarded for the very reason, perhaps !

Regarding the veracity of the Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra strife, the findings of Maurice Bloomfiel l are very valuable.[320] In his Ṛgveda Repetitions, he has pointed out how as many as four consecutive verses are common to the Maṇḍalas of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra : (VII 2.8-11 = III 4.8-11). Both are Āprī-hymns. Besides, the two Books share no less than 14 lines in common. Speaking of groups of stanzas repeated in the Ṛgveda, Bloomfield observes : " There comes to mind in this connection the traditional hostility of the Viśvāmitras, the reputed authors of the 3rd book and the Vasiṣṭhas, the reputed authors of the 7th book. This centres about the so-called Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ (RV III 53.21-14) which are supposed to contain a curse of the Viśvāmitras against the Vasiṣṭhas. As early as TS 3.1.7.3; 5.4.11.3, Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha are opposing parties in a Vihava[321] or conflicting call upon the gods. Roth and Geldner regard the traditional hostility of the two ṛṣi clans as old. But the hymns do not express it. At least, it is strange that their two Āprī-hymns III 4 and VII 2 share no less than four stanzas word for word. We should expect diversity there if anywhere."

Having started so well with almost a pledge that one has to look back to the Vedas[322] for the truth of the legends, one finds the versatile scholar J. Muir succumb to the influence of the legends narrated in later literature. Relying on the veracity of these he brought to bear quite serious thought over the transformation which had come upon the alleged Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra feud in successive ages and put forward certain generalisations like "contests between the Brāhmans and Kṣatriyas" apparently for superiority.[323] The contests however ended in glorifying the qualities of the Brāhman or the principles and modes of life for which he stood. In recent times, F. E. Pargiter pursued the study, especially of the Purāṇas, on the same lines and, postulated the theory of two traditions in ancient history and legnd, *viz.* the Brāhmana tradition and Kṣatriya tradition. In so doing he laid at the former's door the blame of distorting facts to suit its own purpose of maintaining

319. Supra and notes 38 and 155-157.

320. *Vide* Bloomfield : RVR (HOS vols. 20 and 24) pp.xviii, 492 and footnote ; 646-47 also Max Muller ASL p. 465.

321. Supra n.36. Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni had a contest with Vasiṣṭha, Jamadagni saw the Vihavya hymn (RV X 126.1) and drew away all the power and strength of the adversary. Vihavya is the seer of the Hymn according to the Anukramaṇī.

322. MOST I 318.

323. A whole chapter is written on this (MOST I ch. IV pp. 296-400). Expressions here and there like incidents being " coloured by the Brāhmanical prepossessions of the narrator " (p. 359) indicate the perspective which cannot be described as truly historical.

the importance of the Brāhmana in the social structure of the age.[324] To this end, he made capital out of the legend of Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra relationship (chapter I). He would have rendered signal service to ancient history and tradition if, instead of eking out the subtle but harmful distinctions in tradition, he had concentrated on proclaiming the slender foundation on which such an undesirable structure of hatred was built.

It is necessary to meet the arguments and theories advanced in the book : ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORICAL TRADITION, but it may be permissible to offer some remarks on the perspective of the dissertation as a whole. Pargiter has made a profound study of the Purāṇas. He perceives two currents of tradition, the Brāhmanical and the Kṣatriya ; the former reflected in the Samhitās, the Brāhmaṇas and other Vedic books, and the latter reflected mostly in the Epics and the Purāṇas. One cannot deny the existence, from time immemorial, of a twofold tradition in any given age. The version of a story, for instance, among the literate based on books and the version among the less literate common folk which is based on hearsay: these two represent this twofold tradition. But Pargiter has viewed this most natural sociological aspect in a wrong perspective inasmuch as he has dubbed the twofold stream as two distinct entities, not infrequently, motivated by considerations of mutual exclusiveness among Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas. In this kind of interpretation, he takes inspiration evidently, as pointed out above, from Dr. John Muir who, in his ORIGINAL SANSKRIT TEXTS, has developed a doctrine, par excellence, of Brāhmaṇa-Ksatriya hostility. Such rivalry and conflict between individuals may have existed in ancient times ; but they were not part of anybody's or any group's beliefs and duties. Certain circumstances forced certain happenings, but it will be a great mistake to suppose that a vein or an undercurrent of rivalry and feud always subsisted these happenings from age to age. This is a precept which does incalcuable harm to the student of history and to the historical method of cultural investigation. The charge, for instance, is that the Brāhmanical priest dominated and got on with gifts etc. from kings. Be it so, what harm? The conditions were such. The social codes were written by Brāhmanical priests, quite true. But why does the Brāhmanical priest write a thing which is not for the welfare of society and which is not acceptable thereto ? In the revolutions of ages, changes are inevitable ; that is the Law of the Universe. The āstika and the nāstika, like good and bad, have always been co-existent and thrive on each other, really. Every system or science has had supporters and dissenters, and we think each is strong as such, because of friends and foes. If we pile up the brick of the same size and symmetry one upon the other in one order only, the pile will

324. Pargiter AIHT (1922). The two traditions explained pp. 6-7 ; a ruthless attack on what he calls the brāhmanic tradition characterises the whole work (see pp. 10-11, chs. II and V). The author's study of ancient Indian literature has betrayed want of appreciation. To meet his arguments is outside the purview of this study, indeed. Suffice it to mention that Pargiter's conclusions are not, in general, commended by scholars. *cf.* Winternitz : HIL p. 521 n.3. " I doubt, however, whether we are justified in drawing the line between the Kṣatriya tradition and the brahmanical tradition as definitely as is assumed by Pargiter." *cf.* again, p. 528 n.2. In earlier years, Pargiter's views were contested by Prof. Keith : JRAS (1914) 1021 ff., (1915) 328 ff.

topple down with one push; but pile them lengthwise and breadthwise, the wall gains in resistance. That is fundamental law. But if we try to dissect and place the lengthwise and breadthwise bricks separately, where is the wall? It is the first duty of man to visualise this unchangeable Law of Ṛta or Cosmic Order, with a desire for knowledge for its own sake. There he should try to separate them. The story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (R. L. Stevenson) is an instance in point. Genius will turn to perversity if its sharp edge is turned to selfish use. There have been frantic attempts in Vedic times to grapple the Unknown. Severest penance and will power have challenged the divine custodians of that hidden TRUTH, who have now and then relented, but on pain of the head splitting into a thousand pieces if the secret is divulged. There has been rivalry even among gods for this knowledge as is borne out by the story of Dadhyañc, to whom the Sun-god imparted the "madhuvidyā" (nectar of knowledge). Asked by the Aśvins, Dadhyañc explained the pledge and begged forgiveness. But the deft surgeons of heaven grafted a horse's head on the sage and persuaded him to give out the secret knowledge through the horse's mouth. The object achieved, they replaced the original head. The sage, however, did not escape the Sun's warth. That apart, experiments with truth, ridden to extremes, are fraught with danger to humanity. This does not require elaboration, living as we do in this Atomic Age.

Should we then eschew knowledge and feel complacent with the maxim 'Ignorance is bliss'? No. We *should* gain knowledge; but it should be subject to strict discipline, with passions and emotions sublimated into that stratum of peace and realisation of one's oneness with the Universe. Otherwise we are let down. In a miniature form Muir and Pargiter have propounded the twin traditions and unduly emphasised their apparent incompatibility, perhaps not realising that such an attempt will leave deep furrows in that vulnerable body called Society, which would be difficult to level up.[325] There have been upheavels in the past in our Bharatavarṣa; everytime, society has survived and stood on its tradition, with a reorientation needed by the times. It has emerged with a new and bright outlook. The historian's duty, however, is to unravel the strings, but never to pull them!

Taking into consideration so many activities on the part of the sages Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, it appears marvellous for one individual to achieve so much in one life-time. As it is common in the legends, a Ṛṣi does penance to please Indra ordinarily for a thousand years. Viśvāmitra did penance, according to the Rāmāyaṇa, for thousands of years, in all the four quarters put together. Vasiṣṭha is the priest of the Ikṣvāku race. Though once, perhaps at the beginning of his career, he had to give up his body on account of Nimi's curse, he was before long reborn and filled the same office as priest of the Ikṣvākus with all due respect and authority. Ever since he remained immortal down to the reign of Śrī Rāma, son of Daśaratha. Moreover, he laid the whole world under a debt of gratitude, according to the Viṣṇu-purāṇa (III 3.9), by being the redactor of the Veda in the

325. Pargiter, it may be recalled, was a member of the Indian Civil Service.

eighth Dvāpara.[326] In the Rāmāyaṇa, both the sages are connected with the Ikṣvāku kings Triśaṅku, Ambarīṣa, Sudās and Daśaratha who are, from one another, separated by very long intervals, being 28th, 44th, 49th and 60th descendants respectively from the founder. The legends therefore take it for granted that the sages, by virtue of their austerities, were men of 'miraculous longevity,' 'possessed of a vitality altogether superhuman.'[327] The common conception is that these holy sages are immortal; they reside in heaven or somewhere in the Himālayan region, but invisible to mortals. Now and then they would descend upon the earth to bless the Believer. This tenet affords safe anchor for the popular mind; for, what is impossible for the gods and saints of the golden Past?

Or, there is, to solve this riddle, the other expedient of counting a number of Vasiṣṭhas and Viśvāmitras. Thus Pargiter discovers more than nine Vasiṣṭhas and three or more Viśvāmitras.[328] It is curious thing, however, that the old sages have mostly been designated by their gotras as it is the case even today in some tracts of India where people are known by their surnames. In the RV also, we are familiar with expressions Viśvāmitrāḥ, Vasiṣṭhāḥ, Jamadagnayaḥ etc. They and their descendants are seers of hymns in the various "family-books." It is reasonable to think that those that came after the great Ṛṣis scrupulously kept up their traditions and distinguishing characteristics. But through centuries of life envisaged by the various incidents connected with the two sages, it would be unsound to count the number of them involved. And so far as the people are concerned it has been immaterial how many they were; for their exemplary characteristics were important for posterity. The saintliness and forbearance, for instance, of Vasiṣṭha; the dynamic activity and universal friendliness of Viśvāmitra; the one an embodiment of divine grace and the other an apostle of Human Endeavour (Puruṣakāra).

IX

SUMMARY

1. The RV. presents Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra as great sages who were leaders of their respective clans and who established sound traditions. They are seers of maṇḍalas; favourites of the gods Varuṇa and Indra respectively; endowed with supernatural powers such as to render rivers fordable etc. Both befriended, and were priests of, Sudās, evidently on different occasions. Vasiṣṭha saved Sudās

326 'The Vedas have already been divided 28 times in the course of the present or Vaivasvata Manvantara; this division has always taken place in the Dvāpara age of each system of four yugas. In the first Dvāpara, Brahmā Svayambhū himself divided them; in the sixth, Mṛtyu (Death or Yama); whilst in the eighth Dvāpara, it was Vasiṣṭha who was the Vyāsa or divider.' MOST I, p. 336.

327. Ibid p. 362.

328. AIHT Ch. XVIII. It is unconvincing but amusing to see Pargiter hunt up the personal na mes of the several Vasiṣṭhas, Devarāj, Āpava, Atharvanidhi I and II, Śreṣṭhabhāj, Suvarcas etc. A similar attempt at unmaking different Viśvāmitras by their names proved futile ch. XXI. The one name suggested *i.e.* Viśvāratha is more likely an attribute than a name. See supra.

from a disaster in his Battle with the Ten Kings (Dāśarājña), by steering him across the Paruṣṇi before being overpowered by the enemies. Viśvāmitra similarly led the same chieftan across the confluence of Vipāś and Śutudrī; and performed a thousand-offer-sacrifice before a distinguished gathering of the Āṅgirasas, the Bhojas and others. Both sages expressed themselves powerfully against enemies and constantly invoked the protection of the gods to be saved from their malignant attacks.

2. The first and only mention of a discord between them in the later Samhitās is in the TS. It was a dispute between Vasiṣṭha on the one part and Visvāmitra and Jamadagni on the other, regarding a ' conflicting call (vi-hava) of the gods', as Bloomfield puts it. The text however says that in that dispute, Jamadagni saw the " vihavya " hymn (RV X 128·1)[329] and drew away all the strength of the adversary. The TS also records, for the first time about Vasiṣṭha's bereavement caused by the death of his son or sons (hataputraḥ) and about his desire to wreak vengeance against the Saudāsas. On the other hand, the importance of both the sages for the Sacrifice is stressed. The SV and AV do not bear any sign of the rivalry; the latter simply praises them uniformly.

3. The Brāhmaṇas further emphasise the contribution to the sacrificial system made by the two sages, who together officiated at Hariścandra's sacrifice (AB). Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra are the Mind and Speech or Breath and Ear of the sacrifice; they are, to the sacrifice, like two wheels to a chariot. At first Vaiṣṭhas alone were to be Brahmā priests but later anyone who knew the job (ŚB). There is constant reference to Vasiṣṭha's bereavement and the sacrifice which he performed or the sāmans (Janitra) which he saw, to obtain progeny and to defeat the Saudāsas. PB is the only work to speak of a four-day rite of victory (sañjaya) which Viśvāmitra, king of the Jahnus (Jahnūnām rājā) performed to obtain the kingdom. Viśvāmitra's martial spirit and sportsmanship are adverted to in connection with the Krośa and Rohita-Kūlīya sāmans.

It is remarkable that nowhere does any Brāhmaṇa say or suggest that Viśvāmitra was responsible for Vasiṣṭha's misfortune.

4. Yāska does not refer to any hatred between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra. Explaining the name Vipāś, he says that the river got the name because of her loosening the bonds when Vasiṣṭha wanted to drown himself in her waters.

It is in the Bṛhaddevatā that the first reference is made to the Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ (Vasiṣṭha-haters) and an injunction that they should neither be recited nor heard on pain of the head splitting into hundred parts etc. Poignant reference is made to the calamity which befell Vasiṣṭha in that King Sudāsa, turning a demon, killed his hundred sons. Vasiṣṭha's pedigree has been described as also his funny experiences in a dream. There is an explicit statement that Viśvāmitra, having ruled the Earth, attained the status of a Brahmarṣi and also got a hundred and one

329. According to Sarvā. Vihavya is the Ṛṣi of the hymn.

sons. Viśvāmitra is commended as a universal friend; his conversation with the Rivers (Vipāś and Śutudrī) is stated as also his discomfiture at the hands of Śakti.

The Sarvā. gives the pedigree of Viśvāmitra and briefly refers to the conversation with the Rivers ; does not at all mention the controversy with Śakti. There is a brief reference to Śunaśśepa being adopted by Viśvāmitra as his son and named Devarāta. Sarvā. relates for the first time the incident of Śakti thrown into fire by Saudāsas, whereas the incident is not recognised by the Tāṇḍaka (PB). Commentator Śiṣya, however, elaborates the Śakti-controversy as well as Śakti-murder.

Commentator Durgācārya refuses to comment on the Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ, because he is a Kāpiṣṭhala Vāsiṣṭha. There have been instances of scribes having omitted that portion of the text and commentary as noticed by Max Müller and Roth.[330]

•Nītimañjarī says that Śakti survived the flames !

Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra hostility, thus, acquired wide publicity and implicit belief by the time of BD (400 B.C.), so much so that society was prone even to expunge from the Vedic text the few verses known as Vasiṣṭha-dveṣiṇyaḥ. (So vehement is the protest in BD IV 117-120). Justice requires to be done to Viśvāmitra also.

5. In the conception of the Epics and the Purāṇas, the belief in the Vasiṣṭha-Viśvāmitra hatred has been firmly established. The Rāmāyaṇa describes only the process of Viśvāmitra's elevation to the status of a Brahmarṣi. All revengeful stories are elaborated in the Mbh. and further in the Purāṇas. Such inveterate hatred is fancied that Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra curse each other to become Āḍī and Baka (a kind of birds of portentous height) and then fight as such for years when only Brahmā could come and pacify them with suitable admonition. General impression would be that Vasiṣṭha patiently bore all the insults and onslaughts of Viśvāmitra, whereas the latter prompted by jealousy at Vasiṣṭha's greatness always sought an opportunity to attack him. He even tried to kill him ; only the River Sarasvatī tricked him at the risk of being cursed. Finally Viśvāmitra's cruel treatment of Hariścandra is phenomenal. If all that did happen, it is hard to develop any sense of reverence to the Sage.

But a perusal of the above historical investigation will prove that later literature does not reflect the truth. There has been so much of concoction and distortion. There is no doubt that all that was done, by whomsoever that was responsible, with bad taste and unworthy motive. Let us now look at the facts and realise that the two sages were not at all enemies of each other.

6. Recent opinion has on the one hand observed the hollowness of what is called the traditional hostility between Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, as revealed by a study of the most ancient literature ; and on the other, postulated that the same

330. MM RV² Vol. II, p. 23, SBE XXXII, p. xlvi note b.

reflects a continued conflict between the Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas to gain supremacy over each other and that later literature has not done justice to facts.

7. *Conclusion* : (*a*) Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra, already sages of high repute, in the comprehension of the RV, were not enemies of each other. Both of them, being eminent priests of the foremost kings of the day, had common enemies to contend with in the course of their expansion in India.

(*b*) There have been definite instances of their co-operation for common good. Witness the system of sacrifices which they perfected.

(*c*) Should there have been any differences between them, they must relate to some sacrificial technique or to a too personal jealousy at each other's success in their support to kings. But it was never such as to cause rivalry and hatred between clans and races.

(*d*) It lacks vedic authority to say that Viśvāmitra was a Kṣatriya elevated to Brāhmanhood. Apart from orthodox tradition, researches point to the fact that the caste held sway over the people during a very late period of the Ṛgvedic Age.[331] As Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra belonged to the hoary past even at the time of Ṛgvedic compilation, it will be short-sighted to attribute any varṇa to them. In the words of Bloomfield, the RV presupposes 'a long antecedent activity' and represents 'the mixed final precipitate of a later time.'[332] Even if in that remote age they did observe the distinction of varṇas, it was only one of profession and not of birth.[333]

(*e*) To make Viśvāmitra responsible for Vasiṣṭha's misfortune is unjust, in the absence of any tangible evidence. In later fabrications they have been allowed to wreak vengeance against each other, sufficiently. They are quits.

(*f*) Vasiṣṭha is saintly, is an embodiment of all that is best in man and god; therefore he is Vasiṣṭha. Viśvāmitra is brilliant, an embodiment of Human Endeavour (Puruṣakāra), a self-made Yogin and friend to all. It behoves us to transcend jealousy, hatred and acrimony, and rise to heights of sympathy, grace and good-will.

331. HIL p. 66.
332. RVR p. 646.
333. Mbh. XII 188.10.
Na viśeṣo'sti varṇānām sarvam brāhmam idam jagat /
Brahmaṇā pūrvasṛṣṭam hi karmabhir varṇatām gatam //